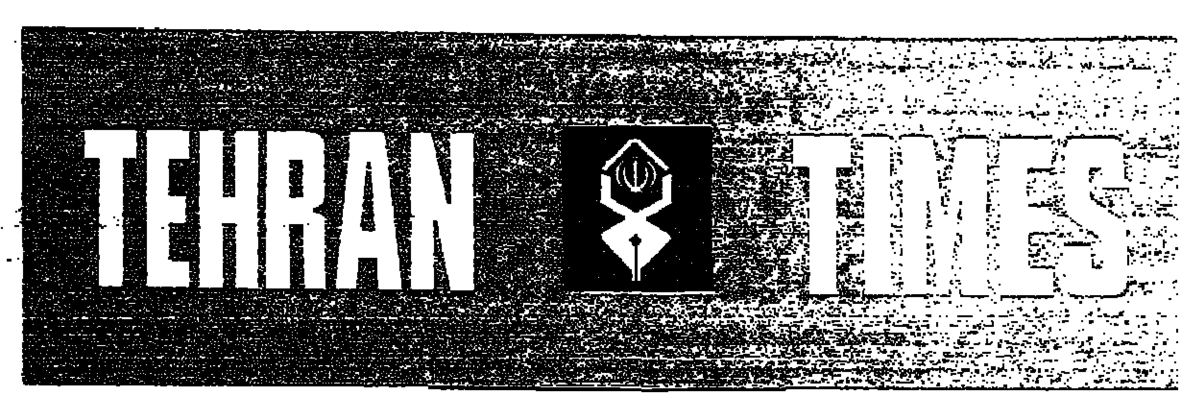
## President Rafsanjani Felicitates New Indian Premier

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Thursday cabled a message to Inder Kumar Gujral, felicitating him for his election as India's new prime minister.

The Iranian president also expressed hope that relations between Iran and India would further broaden during Gujral's term in office.




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## Leader Pardons Prisoners on Eve of Eid-ul-Ghadir

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, on Friday issued a clemency decree pardoning or reducing the imprisonment terms 962 convicts sentenced by Islamic Revolution courts and military tribunals.

The clemency decree has been issued on the eve of the auspicious Eid-ul-Ghadir, the day when Imam Ali (AS), the commander of the faithful, was divinely designated as the vicegerent of Prophet Mohammad (S).

(Contd on Pg. 14)

# General Assembly Demands Halt to Har Homa

UNITED NATIONS — The UN General Assembly demanded an immediate halt Friday to construction of Jewish housing in a disputed area of Bait-ul-Moqaddas despite a U.S. appeal for the United Nations to keep out of the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

The resolution, approved by a vote of 134-3 with 11 abstentions, also recommends an end to "all forms of support" for Israeli settlement activities.

Only the tiny Pacific island state of Micronesia joined the United States and Israel in voting against the resolution, approved at the end of the General Assembly's first emergency special session since 1982.

Several major countries such as Germany, Norway, Canada and Australia abstained.

But the Arabs succeeded in mustering greater support than they did last month, when the General Assembly adopted a weaker resolution by 130 votes.

The vote not only reflects widespread international opposition to the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu but also to the Clinton administration campaign to keep the international community from involvement in the issue.

Washington believes international involvement will only harden positions and make it more difficult to revive the peace process.

But the Arabs say Israel's decision to build a 6,500-unit housing project on an area that the Palestinians want as a future capital.

The Arabs sought the special session after the United States used its Security Council veto twice last month to block resolutions against the project. There is no veto in the General Assembly but its resolutions are non-binding.

"The message which was sent today by the international community is a very powerful one," the Palestinian UN representative Nasser al-Kidwa said. "The membership refused a certain attitude from preventing the Security Council to protect international peace and security."

Before the vote, U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson told the General Assembly that the Uuited States wanted to tell "our friends in the United Nations frankly" that UN bodies "should not insert themselves into issues that the negotiating partners have decided will be addressed" in future talks.

"This can only harden the positions of both sides and make their work even more difficult," Richardson said.

The United States has also criticized the project, which the Israelis call Har Homa and the Arabs Jebel Abu Ghneim.

But Richardson said the resolution submitted by Arab and Muslim countries "sets a dangerous precedent" by infringing on the authority of the Security Council.

The resolution demands "immediate and full cessation" of the Har Homa project and "calls for the cessation of all forms of assistance and support for illegal Israeli activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Bait-ul-Moqaddas, in particular settlement activities."

The United States does not consider Bait-ul-Moqaddas as "occupied territory," and prefers to let the Palestinians and Israelis nego-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

# Hamas Asks Arafat to Relaunch Intifada

GAZA CITY — The Palestinian Movement Hamas said Saturday it had asked President Yasser Arafat to relaunch the Intifada or uprising against Israel as the only option available to the Palestinians.

After a month-long deadlock in the peace process "our only alternative in the short term is the Intifada," Hamas spokesman Mahmud Zahar said.

The Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation began in 1987 and ended in 1993 with the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accords, which Hamas fiercely opposes.

"Arafat now admits that our gloomy predictions at the start of the peace process were well-founded," Zahar told AFP.

The peace process has been in deep crisis since Israel began work in mid-March on a new Jewish settlement in annexed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, which the Palestinians claim as their future capital.

Arafat has said Israel must halt construction if peace talks are to resume, something right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netan-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

# Islamic Government Based on Intimate Relations Between Ruler and People

روز اکمال دین و اثبات ولایت علوی بر پیروان اسلام ناب محمدی تبریک و تهنیت باد.

Photo: Kaveh Ahmadi

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, here Saturday dwelt on the importance of the Eid-ul-Ghadir event saying that the real context of the event is *Velayat* and that the issue points up the fact that in *Velayat* system there is close link between *"Valy"* (ruler) and the subjects.

Addressing the officials of the country who called on him on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Ghadir, said that the appointment of Imam Ali (AS) as the leader of the Muslims after the departure of the Holy Prophet of Islam has been a great lesson for mankind.

The political philosophy of Islam is based on strong links between the governor and the people, the Leader said, adding that any government lacking such links with the people, is not based on *Velayat*. Those who come to power through coup and lack of piety or other criteria, their system is not based on *Velayat*.

In an Islamic system based on *Velayat*, there is an intimate connection between the ruler and the subjects, he said, adding, Islam stresses the fulfilment of the people's demands as a basic principle. Hence Imam Ali who was a perfect Vali, is an epitome for us.

Imam Ali was never detached from the people even when he was not in power, the Leader underlined, adding, the Islamic system draws its strength from its intimate relations with the people. The officials have close ties with the people in such a system and they have love for the officials. The officials in turn are the embodiment of Iranian nation's aspirations and demands.

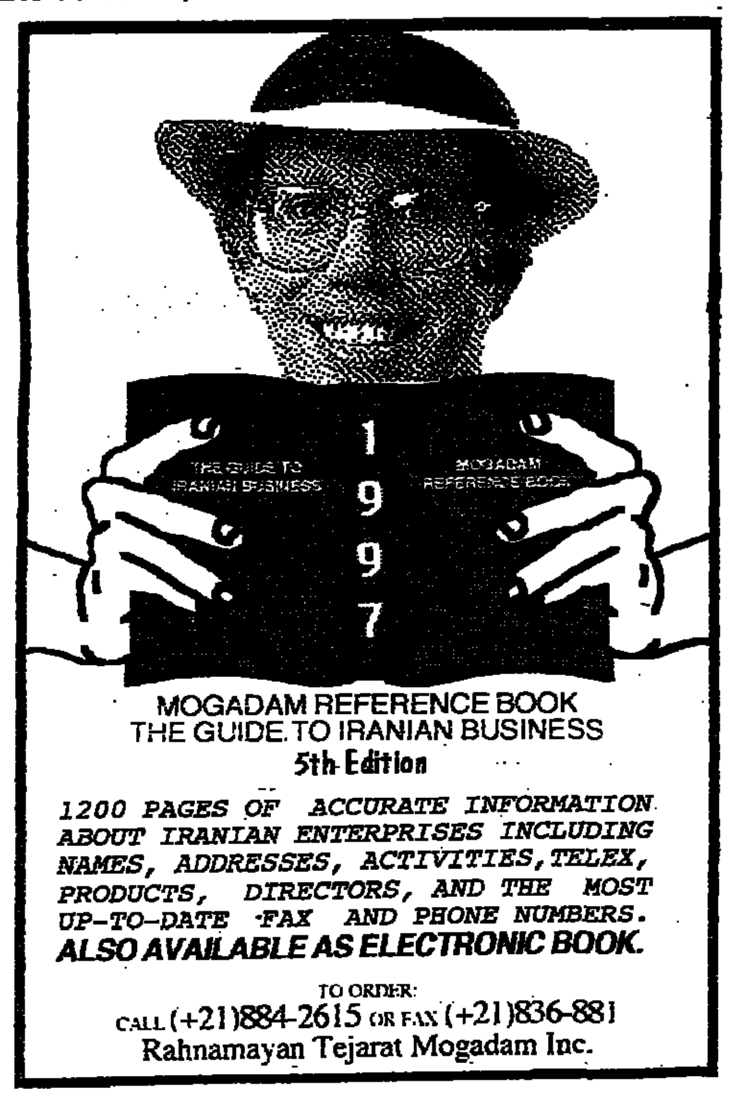
The Leader congratulated the seekers of truth around the world and the Iranian nation on the divine appointment of Imam Ali (AS) as the vicegerent of Prophet Mohammad (S).

The event *Eid-ul-Ghadir* occurred on Zil-Hajjeh 18 in the year 10 AH (632 AD) while the Prophet (S) was returning from the farewell pilgrimage. As recorded by scholars of every denomination including the Shias and Sunnis, Prophet Mohammad (S) halted the 100,000-odd caravan of pilgrims and declared his cousin and son-in-law Ali as his successor upon revelation of the following verse of the Holy Qoran:

O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message *and Allah will protect you from* the people... (5:67)

The Holy Prophet's emphasis in his sermon that he was leaving behind the two weighty things the Book of God and his own progeny the Ahl-ul-Bait and his immortal words on this occasion 'Mun Kunto Mowla fa Hadha Aliyun Mowla' (for whomsoever I am master this Ali is hismaster) ensured the continuation of divine guidance after him.

(Contd on Pg. 14)




# Ciller Raises Possibility of Pulling Out of Coalition




*(Compiled From Dispatches)*

ANKARA — Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller on Saturday raised for the first time the possibility of her party pulling out of the Islamist-led coalition government.

"If deemed necessary, the authorized party bodies may meet to decide whether to continue or end the government," Ciller was quoted as saying by the Anatolia news agency.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

# Boroujerdi Confers With Afghanistan's Dostam

*Tehran Times Service*



TEHRAN — Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific affairs Alaeddin Boroujerdi as part of his mediation efforts between different Afghan factions and ethnic groups held his first round talks in Shiberghan, capital of the Jawzjan Province, on Wednesday with leader of Harakat-i Milli-i Islami Abdul Rashid Dostam.

In the meeting, General Dostam praised Iran's peace efforts, saying the Supreme National Defense Council of Afghanistan is determined to resist any threats.

He said the Taleban militia and its foreign supporters with their war-mongering policies are responsible for the current crisis and bloodshed in Afghanistan, and expressed hope for a speedy end to the interal conflicts in the interests of peace and tranquility in the country.

Boroujerdi for his part voiced Iran's concern on continuation of inter-factional conflict in Afghanistan and said the state of tension and unrest is not only against the interests of the Afghan people but also against the interests of whole of the region.

He added that the United Nations representative for Afghan affairs should further activate his peace efforts by frequent exchange of views with regional states and should try more to assist Afghan people get rid of their present problems.

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In the Name of God

O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be unyielding to them; and their abode is hell, and evil is the destination.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:73)

# OPINION

## Unequal Distribution of Wealth, Main Threat to Islamic Revolution

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei called on the officials on Saturday to prevent the emergence of a small well-to-do upper class at the cost of deprivation of a large segment of the society.

The Leader has rightly singled out a serious problem which, if not contained, can undermine the Islamic Revolution.

In order to realize the roots of the problem, it would not be out of place to mention that two main factors contributed to the downfall of the monarchy in Iran: economic; and politico-religious factors.

During the last years of the Shah's rule, the petrodollars that poured into Iran's coffer went mainly to the members of the ruling family and their close associates. As a result a small well-to-do upper class was formed which monopolized the country's wealth and power while this policy alienated the masses from the ruling class. The destiny of this class was intertwined with that of monarchy while the masses joined the Islamic Revolution under the leadership of late Imam Khomeini.

Discrimination and class differences are basically anti-Islamic and considered counter-values in Islam.

We have sworn enemies outside our country who are out to eliminate the Islamic Revolution, but our adversaries have thus far failed to undermine the Islamic Revolution because the Islamic system enjoys the support of the masses. Therefore, alienation of the masses from the government is more dangerous than any outside enemy, for once the masses are alienated the enemies can easily deal their blow.

Just distribution of wealth and provision of equal opportunities for every Iranian citizen on the basis of merit are among the most crucial pillars of an Islamic system. In order to eradicate any ground for the emergence of a small well-to-do upper class, we should eliminate nepotism and discrimination from Iranian political landscape.

## Iran's Envoy: Middle East Should Become a Nuclear-Free Zone

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — Iran's Representative to the United Nations Mehdi Danesh Yazdi stressed that Middle East should turn into a zone free atomic weapons through the cooperation of all sides in the area.

Speaking at the UN Nuclear Disarmament Conference on Wednesday, he added that Israel's non-committment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the main obstacle to this becoming a reality, an IRNA report from New York said.

Danesh Yazdi said that the creation of an atomic free zone is the first step towards the removal of nuclear threat in the world. To reach this goal especially in some areas including the Middle East, it is essential to encourage the countries to reinforce the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

UN Commission on Disarmament began its general discussion on Monday in New York on various kinds of armament in the world. The meeting which will continue up to May 13 will review the establishment of nuclear-free zones, suggestions to hold a special session of the General Assembly on disarmanent and the procedures for laying down guidelines on the control of conventional weapons with a view to enforcing world peace.

The Iranian delegate referring to the continued support of UN for the establishment of nuclear-free zone in the Middle East and the commitment of all interested parties in the area except Israel to the NPT called for constructive and feasible steps by the UN in this regard.

He said Israel's refusal to accept the treaty and its related monitoring system by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is a strong destabilizing factor.

He stressed that due to the sensitivity of the Middle East region, it is essential to channel all efforts in the direction of transforming this region into a zone free for all destructive weapons.

He said that the UN Disarmament Commission is a suitable forum to discuss the creation of nuclear-free zones in the world and putting forward guidelines and suggestion in this field. He called on the commission to examine ways to remove existing obstacles towards reaching this goal.

The Iranian delegate described as fruitful, the convening of a world disarmament conference at a top level before the start of the twenty-first century to prevent the outbreak of war and steer programs for the coming century.

The UN Disarmament Commission which is attended by delegates from 185 member countries is currently examining proposal to convene a special General Assembly session on disarmament in 1999.

## Takht Ravanchi: EU's Stance Against Iran Impudent

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — In a letter to United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan on Friday, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Iran to the UN Majid Takht Ravanchi denounced the Berlin court's verdict as well as the European Union's stance against Iran as baseless and impudent.

The letter considered condemnation of such allegations as necessary because it marred the aspiration for peace and global security, IRNA reported.

Takht Ravanchi also refuted the allegations mentioned in a note to Annan by Holland's permanent envoy to the UN.

The Iranian official considered the Dutch official's action as a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of international laws, especially the principle of equality, sovereign rights, non-intervention in others' internal affairs and legal immunity.

## Kashani: Eid-ul-Ghadir Beacon of Guidance for Humanity



*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — Tehran's substitude Friday prayer leader, Ayatollah Emami Kashani, said to the worshipers at the congregational prayer that Eid-ul-Ghadir is an eternal beacon of guidance for the humanity.

Kashani made the remark on the eve of the Eid, a historic day when God the Almighty ensured the continuation of Divine guidance with the appointment of Ali ibn abi-Talib (AS) as the succesor of Prophet Mohammad (S).

He said the absolute leadership of mankind is not the belief of Muslims only, but even Christians as well as philosophers and gnostics share the belief that it is *Velayat* (supreme jurisprudence) which guarantees the objectives of religion and human life.

Quoting French philosopher Professor Henri Corbin, Kashani said that in the same way that God had sent prophets for the guidance of the human race, there should be some divinely-decreed personages after the prophets to save mankind from pitfalls, since reason demands that guidance should not abruptly end.

He elaborated that *Velayat* also means closeness to God, and whoever enlightened his inner soul with this dynamic belief that Imam Ali (AS) was divinely-ordained as the master of affairs after Prophet Mohammad (S), would be above the temptations of the mortal world, by modelling his life on that of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS).

## Russian MP: German Court's Verdict Not Lawful

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — A member of the Russian Duma, sergei mitrokhin, underlined that the politically-motivated remarks at the German court against Iran has no legality and his country hopes for removal of the obstacle created in the way of Tehran-Bonn relations.

The Duma member, who is visiting Iran at the invitation of the Armenian deputies of the Iranian Majlis, said here Thursday that perhaps West seeks to use the ruling of the court as a ploy to isolate Iran.

The Russian parliamentarian in an interview with IRNA added, "The move of the West will not only have no harm on Iran but the main losers will be the West."

Referring to the social and political status of religious minorities in Iran, he said that during his short stay in Iran he has noticed the excellent living conditions of religious minorities in the Islamic Republic.

He added that a very clear argument which proves this claim is the equal privileges given to deputies representing religious minorities in the Majlis in the time alloted for approving or rejecting bills.

## New Iranian Ambassador to Vatican Presents Credentials

ROME — Iran's New Ambassador to the Vatican City Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Hadi Abd-e Khodaei presented his credentials to Deputy Prime Minister of the Vatican City, Giovanni Batistare.

The deputy prime minister of the Vatican City said to the Iranian ambassador that the Vatican city is determined to broaden relations with the Muslim world and especially with Iran. (IRNA)

## Sahabi: Relations With U.S. Possible If Not Involving Dependence

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The candidate for the upcoming presidential elections Ezatollah Sahabi said here Thursday that in the event be would be elected as the next president of Iran he would establish relations with Washington if that is not going to make Iran in any way dependent on the United States, IRNA reported.

He said as far as his own terms and conditions for resuming relations with Washington are concerned the United States should pull out of the Persian Gulf and should agree to hold talks in a peaceful atmosphere.

He said the idea is not merely a wishful thinking but it can be materialized once conditions are favorable for that development.

## 23rd Int'l Tuberculosis Congress Concludes

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The 23rd international regional congress to fight tuberculosis concluded here on Thursday. In a resolution adopted at its conclusion it offered the best possible ways and means for preventing as well as curing tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases, IRNA reported.

Among those devices, in the judgment of the congress, are development of microscopic laboratory netwroks, quality control, establishing a reference library, and adoption of new standards for chemotherapy of tuberculosis and implementing the dots strategy.

Participants in the four-day congress were representatives from 51 world nations. In all, 400 treatises on the disease were presented to the congress.

On the sidelines of the congress, the first regional workshop of East Mediterranian countries and Europe for controlling the disease started its program here Thursday.

At its inaugural ceremony, Health Minister of Iran Ali Reza Marandi said that each year about 50,000 cases of tuberculosis are diagnosed in Iran but it is expected that the actual number of cases are more than that. He said about 15,000 of those victims get medical treatment at government-affiliated hospitals and the rest at the private hospitals and clinics.

Thirteen representatives from 12 countries are participating in the workshop. They are Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan.

## Role of Women in Development of Islamic Societies Reviewed



*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — Role of women in Islamic societies was discussed in a meeting between Iran's Permanent Representative to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Sabah Zanganeh and Secretary General of the Islamic Jurisprudence Academy Habib Belkhoja in Jeddah Wednesday.

According to IRNA, the two sides also discussed the recommendations made by an OIC-sponsored gathering on women's role in development of Islamic societies held in Tehran in 1995.

It was decided at the meeting that a committee be formed on the sidelines of the 10th General Assembly of the Islamic Jurisdiction Association to be held in Jeddah this summer to study the issue.

The Tehran gathering adopted a resolution which outlined the principles and fundamentals of women's rights in Islam and gave the necessary recommendations to the OIC foreign ministers.

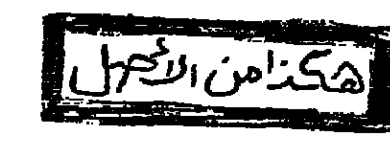
## 2nd Int'l Conference on Silk Road Ends

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The Second International Conference on Silk Road (April 22-23) ended here Wednesday night with an emphasis on further strengthening and expansion of regional ties as well as boosting up of tourist industry in the countries located on the historical Silk Road, IRNA reported.

The Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mostafa Mirsalim in talks at the conclusion ceremony of the meeting expressed hope that the conference and the future such gathering will prepare the ground for bringing about mutual understanding and broadening of cultural exchanges among the countries on the ancient Silk Road.

At the ceremony the participants emphasized on the preparation of a comprehensive program for the countries on the ancient Silk Road with the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).



هكذا من الأصل



LEADER:

# Tariq-al-Quds Manoeuvers No Threat to Regional States

BANDAR ABBAS — The Leader of Islamic Revolution and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said here on Wednesday that viewing the grand Tariq al Quds manoeuvers as a threat to regional countries is a purely American-Zionist propaganda.

He said the military exercises being staged by Iran were neither a threat to the Persian Gulf states nor to any other neighboring countries whose intentions were not transgressional in nature.

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the presence of Iranian armed forces in the Persian Gulf was based on the objective of safeguarding the borders of Islamic Republic of Iran, ensuring the country's independence and firmly standing against any oppressive and domineering power.

The grand Tariq al-Quds manoeuvers are a demonstration of the power of a dignified and honorable nation desiring to make use of its strength to lead a respectable life and decisively confront enemies and transgressors, he added.

Referring to the conspiracy of cultural encroachment, Ayatollah Khamenei warned that global arrogance intends to deviate the youth with such pervasive issues as por-nography and immorality around the world.

He, however, felt proud of the Iranian youth to lead a clean and honorable life with souls filled with the light of spiritualism and morals, which he termed as one of the exceptional phenomena of our times.

Ayatollah Khamenei was speaking to tens of thousands of personnel of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) which have converged on the southern port city of Bandar Abbas to take part in the Tariq al-Quds manoeuvers starting Thursday.

The Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Ayatollah Khamenei, then went on to say that world arrogant forces are trying to impose their domination through every possible means in order to spread their octopus-like tentacles extend in every nook and corner of the world.

He stated that the arrogant powers want to impose their presence in all sensitive and strategic regions, vital waterways and in areas where there are abundant natural resources.

The ayatollah pointed out that they want to impose their will over the nations of the world, adding that Islamic Iran will neither accept such an attitude or bend to such a force, nor is it ready to bear such meddling nuisance.

He said the transgressing forces abused their power to exploit the ingenious Iranian nation during the pre-revolution period of the corrupt regime.

The ayatollah stated that Islam revived the Iranian nation, and its ideology instilled strength and power into its sinews. Almighty Allah sent the late Imam Khomeini to talk in the language of the prophets in order to awaken the nation to the facts that will and determination can bring about miracles, he added.

Islamic Iran acquired those divinely lessons to unchain itself from the bondages of domination and today the country is far ahead in education and development-wise, said Ayatollah Khamenei.

The Islamic Republic is not inferior to any world power and has sufficient strength to defend itself and that no country in the world can deviate it from Islam and the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, he remarked.

The leader of revolution also pointed out that Islamic Iran does not feel the need of remoulding its culture according to the faulty cultural designs. (IRNA)

# President Opens 10th Int'l Book Fair



Photo: Abbas Takin

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here Saturday inaugurated the 10th Tehran International Book Fair (April 26 - May 5).

28 countries are participating at the ten-day fair which is being held at Tehran Permanent Ground for International Fairs. Around 1,400 publishers, information institutes, domestic and foreign printing houses are to display their products in 55 pavilions.

400,000 book titles will be on display in foreign publishers section, of which 27,000 will be in Latin and the rest in Arabic.

Concurrent with the inauguration of the fair, a ceremony was held to select the year's best publishers.

# Iranian Ambassador Meets Greek Communist Party Leader

ATHENS — Iran's Ambassador to Athens, Mehdi Khandaq-Abadi, today met the leader of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), Aleka Papariga, and discussed Greek-Iranian ties and the recent crisis in relations between some European Union countries and Iran in the aftermath of the German court verdict. Papargia told the Iranian envoy that her party fully supports the position of the Greek government in not recalling its ambassador from Tehran, according to an Iranian embassy source.

KKE has 11 deputies in the 300-seat Greek parliament. Yesterday, Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos reiterated that Athens has not recalled its ambassador from Tehran and voiced his opposition to the isolation of Iran.

The Dutch presidency of the European union recently suggested that the 15 member-states should recall their ambassadors from Tehran in solidarity with Germany, but Greece expressed its opposition to the move. (IRNA)

# Ambassador Stresses Determination of Caspian Sea Legal Regime

ALMATY — Iran's Ambassador to Almaty Hassan Qashqavi said here tody that determination of the legal regime of the Caspian Sea should be given priority by the littoral states.

Speaking to IRNA, he expressed hope that clearly defined approaches on the regime would be reached in the forthcoming meeting of the experts of the littoral states to be held here.

# Kharrazi Calls On UN General Assembly to Condemn Israeli Lawlessness

UNITED NATIONS — Iran's permanent envoy to the United Nations, Dr. Seyed Kamal Kharrazi, blasted the expansionist and suppressive acts of the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine, especially in eastern part Holy Quds, calling on the UN General Assembly to take steps for ending such illegal measures.

Kharrazi, speaking at the emergency session of the General Assembly, said the holding of the session for surveying the expansionist policies of the Zionist entity in Palestine and Holy Quds indicated the concern and deep anger of UN members.

He said the members' anger was not only against Israel's continued ignoring of the views of the international community but also against the measure of one of the permanent members of the Security Council that prevents decision-making by the body.

Kharrazi was refering to Washington's vetoing of the resolution against Israel's decision to build new settlements in Holy Quds. The U.S. twice vetoed U.N. Security Council resolutions against Israel last March.

Without doubt, said the Iranian envoy, the vetoing of the resolution against the illegal acts of Israel was not good either for the credibility of the U.N. for law and justice.

He said several U.N. reports and documents including the reports of the special committee for monitoring Israel's suppression of the rights of Palestinians in the occupied land, were sufficient proof to the atrocities of the Zionists. The regime unlawfully arrests and shoots Palestinians, besides destroying their homes, he added.

He continued that confiscation of lands, construction of Jewish settlements and resort to merciless force and intimidation as well as explusion of Palestinians over the past decades has been part of the Zionist designs to strengthen their occupation of Palestinian lands.

Figures showed that the number of zionists settled in the new townships are more than at any other time and this indicates the double-standards of Israel's wicked policy of pretending peace but seizing more and more Arab lands, he said. (IRNA)

# Velayati Back Home From Two-Nation Visit

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati returned home this evening at the end of his two-day visit to the republics of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.

In his talks with reporters at the Mehrabad airport here, Velayati said the objects of his two-nation visit was to deliver President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's invitations to his Azeri and Turkmen counterparts, Heydar Aliyev and Safarmurat Niyazov, for attending the summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Tehran in December. (IRNA)

# Pangalos: Iran, a Guarantor of Peace for the West

ATHENS — Greece's Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos today said Iran is a country which guarantees security for the west and rejected the policy of isolating the Islamic Republic.

"We believe that the domestic situation in Iran is progressing towards the better and slowly conditions are being created for adoption of normal relations with Iran," Pangalos told a press conference.

Iran is one of the two countries which guarantees peace and conditions of peace and active security for the west.

Active security for the west cannot be guaranteed through Turkey, Pangalos said. In reply to IRNA's question on the invitation of the Dutch EU presidency to recall their ambassadors from Tehran, Pangalos said the Greek ambassador has not been recalled from Tehran.

Pangalos explained that the Greek ambassador to Tehran, Dimitris Tsikouris, was taking part in a joint meeting of EU ambassadors based in Tehran in Brussels and that he was expected to come to Athens Wednesday noon.

Tsikouris will spend the easter holidays in Athens with his family and then return to Tehran, Pangalos said.

I do not see why I should punish him for something he is not responsible, he told the Jampacked press conference at the Greek foreign ministry. (IRNA)

## $50m of Good Exported From Khorassan

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - Some $50 million worth of non-oil commodities were exported from Khorassan Province last year, registering an increase of 63.7 percent in terms of value compared to the figure two years ago. Director General of Khorasan Province Industries Department Abdolaziz Hedayat said on Thursday.

In the gathering of the director generals of the ministry of industries held in Mashhad, northeastern Iran, Hedayat numbered the exported items as foodstuff, pharmaceuticals, hygienic products, textiles, clothes, leather, chemicals, metals, vehicles and non-metal minerals.

## Iranian Ambassador Meets Bruneian Minister

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - Iran's Ambassador to Bandar Seri Begawan Javad Ansari met Bruneian Minister of Communication, Pehin Zakaria on Thursday.

At the meeting, the two sides discussed grounds for cooperation between Iran and Brunei in the fields of telecommunication, post and telegraph as well as aviation, IRNA reported.

The diplomat voiced readiness of Iran's Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone for launching telecommunication projects in Brunei.

Ansari and Zakaria, among other things, emphasized the need for tourism facilities and telecommunication between the two Iranian and Bruneian Muslim people.

## Kuwait's State Refiner to Expand Capacity

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - State-owned Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) said Monday it aims to increase refining capacity to 900,000 barrels of oil per day by the start of 1998 as part of a modernization program.

"By the beginning of next year, we plan to reach 900,000 barrels per day (bpd)" of oil refining capacity, KNPC deputy managing director for manufacturing Mohamed Abdel-Rahman Al-Taweel told the daily *Al-Anba*, as quoted by AFP.

KNPC's current capacity stands at about 875,000 bpd from three refineries at Mina Al-Ahmadi, Mina Abdullah and Shuaiba.

Taweel, who is responsible for KNPC's refineries, said the state refiner was working on several projects to increase production and improve export facilities, while repairs are continuing on some refining units destroyed during the 1990-1991 Iraqi occupation.

Work on repairing a unit at the Shuaiba refinery that converts heavy distillates to lighter more profitable oil products will be completed in July this year, Taweel said.

In response to increasing demand for aircraft fuel, KNPC "will undertake to build a new unit at the Al-Ahmadi Refinery next year and will complete modifications to an aircraft fuel treatment unit at Shuaiba refinery," he said.

KNPC currently has three units that produce aircraft fuel, one at each refinery.

Taweel said export jetties at Shuaiba were being modernized, while repairs were being carried out on the jetties at Al-Ahmadi to keep them operational until new facilities become operational in 2002.

KNPC handles Kuwait's local refining and distribution operations and is a subsidiary of the state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.

Kuwait produces about two million bpd of crude oil.

## Malaysian Economy to Grow at 8.2% in 1997

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - Malaysia's economy is expected to grow 8.2 percent in 1997, around the same level as last year, amid increasing exports and investments, an influential think tank said Wednesday in Kuala Lumpur.

But economic growth could rise to 8.5 percent in 1998 as Malaysia poured in huge resources to host the Commonwealth Games, according to the privately-run Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER), as quoted by AFP.

Malaysia's manufacturing-based economy had been growing at an average of more than eight percent annually since 1987.

The Central Bank Negara expects the economy to grow 7.8-to-8.2 percent in 1997 after posting 8.2 percent growth last year.

Bank Negara, in its policy outlook last month, cautioned about pressures on inflation, which it projects will rise to 3.7 percent this year from 3.5 percent in 1996.

Concerns have also been expressed by analysts over the tight labor market and asset inflation, especially after the central bank imposed lending limits to check the evolvement of a Thailand-like property bubble.

MIER said Wednesday that the central bank's property curbs imposed last month aimed at slowing down escalating property prices and curb excessive expansion of "less productive" loans, such as those for the purchase of shares and credit for consumption purposes.

It also said that private consumption growth was expected to dip to 7.6 percent in 1997 from 8.0 percent last year but rise again to 8.1 percent in 1998 amid an anticipated recovery in exports.

It said private sector investment would grow briskly at 13.8 percent and 13.6 percent in 1997 and 1998 respectively from the modest 7.2 percent in 1996.

Public investment was also projected to grow strongly at 12.3 percent in 1997.

Due to increasing imports to feed higher private and public investment and MIER expected Malaysia's current account deficit to rise to 14.3 billion ringgit (5.72 billion U.S.) this year and 14.8 billion ringgit in 1998.

The deficit had narrowed significantly to 13.0 billion ringgit last year from 18.7 billion ringgit in 1995.

## "Iran Makin" Joins IRISL Fleet



*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - The multi-purpose Iran Makin ship joined the feelt of Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) in Bandar Abbass Saturday.

Iran Makin is the fifth ship delivered to Islamic Republic of Iran under a contract singed between IRISL and China for building of cargo ships.

The ship has cost some $25 million and is 174 meters long, 25.6 meters wide and can carry about 22.6 thousand tons of cargo.

Iran Makin which is equipped with four 25-ton cranes can transport some 713 TAU containers in each of her voyages.

By joining of Iran Makin, the country's cargo transportation capacity reached 90 thousand tons.

## Pressure Mounts on India to Eliminate Import Curbs

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - India's major trade partners have mounted pressure on it to roll back import restrictions such as licensing and quotas by 1999, reports Indian daily *The Times of India*.

A Japanese delegation led by its ambassador for International Trade and Economic Affairs Takashi Kiya held talks with officials in New Delhi in the last two days and demanded that India should eliminate its import restrictions by the end of 1999.

India maintains these curbs on imports, termed quantitative restrictions under the balance of payments cover available to developing countries under article 18th of the World Trade Organzsation (WTO) agreement.

In the WTO consultations in January, India was asked by trade partners to present a schedule to eliminate the import restrictions. India agreed to present the phasing out schedule prior to the resumption of WTO consultations on June 2.

The Japanese delegation demanded that the schedule to be presented by India should confirm the commitments including disinvoking the balance of payments provision and elimination of quantitative restrictions.

India has a large negative list of imports, comprising some 2,500 items. Over the last few years, India has been able to remove a number of items from the negative list by shifting them either to the free list or the Special Import Licence (SIL) list.

The items under the free list can be imported without a licence whereas the items under the SIL list can be imported against that instrument issued to exporters as an incentive. SIL is freely transferable and can be purchased on a market premium.

## WTO Says China Must Make 'Ambitious Offer' Before End of Spring

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN - China must make "an ambitious offer" to open its market to foreign trade by the end of spring to keep momentum toward World Trade Organization (WTO) accession, WTO Director General Renato Ruggiero said in Beijing Wednesday.

"The next negotiating session in May must be at least as positive as the one we had in March, and perhaps even more important, before the end of spring the Chinese side must make an ambitious offer on market access," he said, as quoted by AFP.

Ruggiero said it would only be possible to speculate on the timing of China's entry in September, after China's offer and commitments on WTO rules are seen.

"We are approaching the final stage of the negotiation, and because of that, it will be a tough time," he said, adding that it is normal for the "real interests" to be discussed at the end of such a process.

He called for "a sense of urgency and flexibility" in the coming months' work.

Ruggiero, who was to return to Geneva later Wednesday, said he was "very satisfied" after talks with top Chinese officials including Premier Li Peng, Trade Minister Wu Yi, Vice and Vice Minister Li Lanqing.

Beijing is seeking early entry to the global body, but members including the European Union and the United States say China should only be admitted once it fulfills WTO requirements of free trade.

Ruggiero said the Chinese side stressed "the need for them to have a sufficient transitional period to fulfill the commitments they will take."

Under such an arrangement, China will receive WTO membership in exchange for pledges to make changes in its system by stated deadlines.

Chinese officials did not indicate the length of their desired transition period, as this is one of the most delicate issues of the negotiation, he said.

On Tuesday, the Chinese premier told Ruggiero: "China is still a developing country, so the demands on China to enter the WTO cannot surpass the level of its current economic development."

Li also stressed that the issue of China's accession "should not be politicized" in the same way that international trade is still soured by "power politics and sanctions."

Whether or not China is a developing country is a hotly debated issue, as developing countries have a lighter burden of membership requirements.

The WTO chief, who saw the skyscrapers in Shanghai and poor villages near Beijing during his China trip, shied away from the issue. "The reality is that China is a developed and developing country," he said.

The state press frequently accuses countries such as the us of blocking China's WTO entry for political reasons, but Ruggiero said: "no one opposes China's entry so long as there is the right balance of interests at the end of the negotiating process."

WTO Spokesman Keith Rockwell warned Tuesday, however, that with 27 other countries waiting for admission, the organization had to be careful not to bend rules too much for China.

"If the rules are altered to suit one entrant, the other countries will want the same, he said.

China has been holding a series of bilateral talks on accession with member countries, but the key negotiations are held during Geneva meetings of the WTO working group, the next of which is scheduled for next month.

Sticky topics are expected to include discrimination against foreign firms, transparency and price controls.

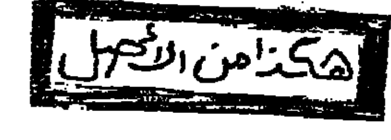
Ruggiero said breakthroughs from the March meeting included Beijing commitments to grant foreign firms trading rights within three years of WTO entry, to enact intellectual property legislation and to eliminate Chinese rules on foreign investment inconsistent with international norms.

WTO membership for a trading giant like China is important because the organization is writing the rules for international trade in the 21st century, and "we want a universal system," he said.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

**The following table shows the foreign exchange rates in rials as released by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Thursday April 24, 1997.**

| COUNTRY | UNIT | Floating Rates BUY | Floating Rates SELL | Export Rates BUY | Export Rates SELL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | dollar | 1,359 | 1,366 | 2,333 | 2,344 |
| Austria | schilling | 145 | 146 | 249 | 250 |
| Belgium | (100) francs | 4,940 | 4,969 | 8,481 | 8,524 |
| Canada | dollar | 1,254 | 1,261 | 2,152 | 2,163 |
| Denmark | krone | 267 | 269 | 459 | 461 |
| France | franc | 302 | 304 | 519 | 521 |
| Germany | mark | 1,020 | 1,026 | 1,751 | 1,759 |
| Holland | guilder | 906 | 911 | 1,556 | 1,564 |
| Italy | (100) liras | 102 | 103 | 176 | 177 |
| Japan | (100) yen | 1,383 | 1,391 | 2,374 | 2,386 |
| Sweden | krone | 228 | 230 | 393 | 395 |
| UAE | dirham | 476 | 479 | 818 | 820 |
| UK | pound | 2,855 | 2,871 | 4,901 | 4,926 |
| U.S. | dollar | 1,750 | 1,755 | 3,000 | 3,015 |



# SPORTS SUMMARY

*Tehran Times Service*

## FORMULA ONE

### *Ferraris Top in San Marino*

**IMOLA, Italy: Britain's Eddie Irvine just outpaced German world champion Michael Schumacher on Friday as the two Ferraris set the fastest pace in opening practice for the San Marino Grand Prix.**

**Racing on the Imola circuit, in the heart of the Ferrari homeland, and named after Enzo Ferrari and his son Dino, Irvine lapped in 1min 25.981sec, a shade over two-one hundredths of a second faster than his team leader.**

**Irvine confessed he struggled a bit because the high grip of the latest tires caught him out in braking.**

**"Halfway through the afternoon we made a big step forward," he said, setting up the car for a track which he said was technically difficult to drive.**

## TABLE TENNIS

### *Chinese Women Into Quarterfinals*

**MANCHESTER, England: China became the first country to qualify for the women's team event quarterfinals following victories over Canada and Japan in the World Table Tennis Championships here on Friday.**

**A 3-0 win over Canada in the morning followed by a 3-1 triumph over Japan put the defending champions on course for gold.**

**Even if they lose to Belgium on Saturday morning, China have done enough to win their qualifying pool.**

**But deputy secretary general of the Chinese Table Tennis Federation Liu Beijian believed European women were getting better and better despite China's tag of overwhelming favorites.**

**Liu pinpointed Sweden, Italy, Germany and Romania as teams which might threaten the Chinese domination in years to come.**

**"I don't think European women have been pushed hard enough by their associations in past years and the Chinese have been way out ahead. But I think European nations will improve to seriously challenge for gold in years to come," Liu said.**

## GOLF

### *James Back Among the Leaders*

**MADRID: Mark James, who last season slumped from ninth to 116th in the European order of merit — the lowest position of his 20-year career — led the Spanish Open at the halfway stage here on Friday.**

**He was two strokes in front of two more Englishmen, Lee Westwood and Roger Chapman, and Denmark's Thomas Bjorn.**

**Westwood shot 68 too, while Chapman, six times a runner-up since joining the circuit in 1981, had a 67. Bjorn, last season's rookie of the year, returned a 69.**

**First round leaders Padraig Harrington of Ireland, last year's winner, and Germany's Alexander Cejka could manage only 76 and 73.**

**Harrington dropped seven behind, after losing a ball on the long 11th and taking seven.**

## TENNIS

### *Krajicek Hits Out at Monte Carlo Jet Set*

**MONACO: Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek lost his patience with the jet set as he was worn down by Australian Open finalist Carlos Moya in the Monte Carlo Open quarterfinals here Friday.**

**"I can understand them putting the restaurant outside because of the sunny weather but it wouldn't hurt them to try to keep their table talk down and turn off their mobile phones," the Dutch fourth seed said of the open-air restaurant which looks down on the center court.**

**Krajicek, who won the Tokyo Open last week, won the first set for the loss of only one game but then found himself out-hit from the baseline by the sixth-seeded Spaniard, who won 1-6, 6-2, 6-4 and now plays Chile's Marcelo Rios.**

## FOOTBALL

### *Ronaldo Denies Barcelona Contract*

**RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's world footballer of the year Ronaldo said here on Friday that he had not signed a new contract with Barcelona as had been reported earlier in the week.**

**"Nothing has been decided. All that concerns me is that we do our best and win the title," the 20-year-old Ronaldo said.**

**Barcelona President Jose Luis Nunez had said on Wednesday that a contract had been agreed which included a 107-million-dollar payment to the club if Ronaldo leaves before the end of 2006.**

### *Maldini in Foreigners Warning*

**FLORENCE, Italy: Italy's Coach Cesare Maldini warned on Friday that the presence of so many foreigners in the Serie A could soon cause problems for the national team.**

**Italian sides like holders Juventus and Inter Milan may be through to the finals of the European Cup and UEFA Cup respectively, but the 65-year-old believes there could be danger ahead.**

**"Two finalists out of three European Cup competitions is an excellent result," he said. "But when I see that the key positions are held by foreigners, I think the national team will have problems in defense and in midfield in a next couple of years' time."**



TURIN, Italy (April 23): Ajax Amsterdam's Arnold Scholten (L) and Juventus Turin's Christian Vieri (R) tussle for the ball during their UEFA Champions League semi final, second leg match. Juventus crushed Ajax 4-1 to advance to the final against Borussia Dortmund in Munich May 28. **(AFP PHOTO)**

## Asian Football Launches War on Drug Abuse

KUALA LUMPUR — The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has launched an all-out war on drug abuse in the sport, its general secretary Peter Velappan said Saturday.

"All national associations are now required to step up efforts to eradicate this menace from the sport," he said in a statement here.

Velappan said this would be done through campaigns to educate all officials, players and coaches on the negative influence of drugs.

National associations are also encouraged to arrange random doping tests of players in their national leagues and for those selected for all national teams as well as the Olympics and the World Cup, he said.

"We do not need drugs in football. Drugs and football just do not mix," Velappan, said, adding: "We want all national associations to take up the challenge to eliminate this problem from Asian football.

Velappan disclosed that the AFC Executive Committee had agreed that the AFC Medical Committee would formulate the rules and regulations governing doping tests.

"Such tests will also be carried out by the Medical Committee at all AFC tournaments in future," he added.

**(AFP)**

## Chang Advances to Semifinals

ORLANDO, Florida — Top seed Michael Chang of the United States beat seventh seed Byron Black of Zimbabwe in straight sets Friday to reach the semifinals of the U.S. Men's Clay Court Tennis Championships.

Chang, who is playing on clay for the first time this season, beat Black, 7-5, 6-3, in the quarterfinals. It was Chang's 19th win in his last 20 matches and took his record for the year to 26-3. He is vying for his fourth title of 1997, after picking up his third in Hong Kong two weeks ago.

Black and Chang exchanged seven service breaks in the first set, Chang finally getting his fourth and decisive break to close out the set after 63 minutes.

In the second set Chang broke Black three times to book his place in the semis in an hour and 46 minutes.

Fifth seed Jason Stoltenberg of Australia, who won here in 1994, will meet Chang in the semifinals. Stoltenberg rallied to beat unseeded Marcelo Filippini of Uruguay, 6-7 (3-7), 6-4, 6-4.

Sixth seed Chris Woodruff outlasted fourth seed and fellow American Alex O'Brien, 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-4.

Woodruff will take on South African Grant Stafford on Saturday.

Stafford downed defending champion Fernando Meligeni of Brazil, 6-3, 6-4. Meligeni suffered just his second loss in 11 matches at this event.

The U.S. Men's Clay Court Championship is the first of three American clay court tournaments leading up to the French Open.

**(AFP)**

## Mandela Boosts Embattled South African Team

LOME — President Nelson Mandela has come to the aid of the crisis-torn South African national team ahead of a World Cup qualifier against Zaire here on Sunday.

Mandela sent a message to long-serving captain Neil Tovey just hours after the African champions arrived in the sweltering Togolese capital for a match moved from Kinshasa because of the Zairean civil war.

"The encounter with Zaire is obviously the biggest challenge to your illustrious leadership of the national team," he told the defender who has won a record 44 caps.

"My hope is that you will bring glory to our people as has been done so often since South Africa became part of the International Football Community," Mandela wrote.

South Africa, who defeated Tunisia last year to lift the African title, saw their hopes of reaching the 1998 finals in France severely jolted when losing in Congo this month.

The Congolese upstarts lead Group 3 with seven points at the halfway stage of the mini-league, followed by South Africa with four and Zaire and Zambia with two each.

National coach Clive Barker said shortly before leaving Johannesburg on Friday that he was considering quitting, even if his team reach the finals for the first time.

Although South Africa have lost only five matches out of 32 since he took control three years ago, Barker has come under frequent fire from officials, supporters and the media.

Many critics blamed his reliance on the bulk of the nations cup-winning team and defensive tactics for the loss in Congo while calls were made for Tovey and midfielders Eric Tinkler and Buthelezi to be axed.

**(AFP)**

## Longevity the Lure for Foreman

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey — George Foreman steps into the ring for the 80th time here on Saturday when he puts his lightly regarded World Boxing Union (WBU) heavyweight title on the line against Lou Savarese.

For Foreman, the title of the upstart sanctioning body is apparently less important than taking another step on the road to history.

"I just want to do something no one has ever done before, to be honest about it," said the 48-year-old preacher whose ring career has spanned four decades. "That's fight into my 50s."

Savarese, 31, brings a 36-0 record to the bout, established against mostly unknown opponents.

He gained a measure of respect in November when he stopped Buster Mathis Jnr with a sixth-round knockout that sent Mathis into retirement.

Foreman said he chose Savarese from a home box office television list of possible opponents that included one-time Mike Tyson-beater Buster Douglas.

Foreman, who held the world heavyweight title from 1973-1974, when he lost it to Muhammad Ali, became the oldest heavyweight world champ in history when he captured the International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Association titles from Michael Moorer in November of 1994.

He eventually relinquished both of those titles rather than fight designated challengers, and apparently now is more concerned with longevity than championships.

**(AFP)**



RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (April 23): Brazilian basketball star and sport secretary for the State of Sao Paulo Oscar Schmidt (L) jokes with U.S. basketball legend Earvin "Magic" Johnson during a press conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Johnson, who found out he was carrying HIV in November 1991, is touring Latin America to speak out for AIDS prevention. **(AFP PHOTO)**

# Presidential Candidates' Registration Starts

*Tehran Times Service*

TEHRAN — The registration of candidates standing in the forthcoming presidential elections began on Thursday and will last for a period of five days.

The candidates official presidential campaign will start after the Interior Ministry reveals the list of the candidates.

The public activities can go on until 24 hours before the election.

After the registration is finished, the Guardian Council will examine the qualifications of the candidates and will give the names of the qualified ones to the Interior Ministry.

According to the Islamic Republic Constitution, the list of those approved by the council will be revealed by the Interior Ministry through the country's mass media.



ARAR, Iraq (April 23): An Iraqi pilot works on the window of his helicopter in the area of Arar on the Iraqi-Saudi border. Seven Iraqi helicopters flown to southern Iraq in defiance of U.S.-patrolled exclusion zone were still waiting April 24 to fly back with Muslim pilgrims from the Saudi border. Iraq sent helicopters to the Saudi border to ferry dozens of sick and elderly Iraqis returning from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

(AFP PHOTO)

## U.S. Blocking Oil-For-Food Contracts to Protest Iraqi Flights

UNITED NATIONS — The Iraqi Envoy to the United Nations on Friday accused Washington of blocking humanitarian contracts under an oil-for-food deal, apparently to punish Baghdad for pilgrim flights.

Iraqi Ambassador Nizar Hamdoon told reporters in New York he had complained to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan that the 15-member UN Sanctions Committee had in the last four days put on hold about 50 contracts.

Asked whether the move appeared linked to the April 9 Iraqi airways flight to Mecca for the annual pilgrimage in defiance of the UN Security Council, Hamdoon replied, "we don't make such linkage as it is unacceptable."

"But this is what most observers are doing, linking the American position on those contracts with that event."

The United States failed to persuade its Security Council partners to denounce the flight as a violation of UN sanctions, "which maybe made the Americans upset by the outcome," Hamdoon said.

Hamdoon said that Annan promised to speed up implementation of the oil-for-food arrangement. (AFP)

# Government Forces Have Key Taleban Town Under Siege

KABUL — Forces of the Afghan government said Saturday they have surrounded rival Taleban fighters in a key eastern provincial capital.

An aide to Ahmad Shah Masood, the Afghan government's military boss, said Asadabad, the capital of the eastern Afghan province of Kunar, has been under siege for the past week.

"Due to bad weather, we couldn't supply our men and we have postponed our attack on Asadabad, but it is surrounded," Abdullah said AFP.

Speaking from Masood's Panjshir Valley stronghold, Abdullah said "We have the Taleban completely cut off."

No independent confirmation of the opposition gains was available, but Taleban officials here on Thursday claimed their fighters had kept on top of the attacks.

Asadabad, situated 190 kilometers (118 miles) east of here, was seized by Taleban during their lighting advance to the capital, Kabul, last September.

However the mountainous region, in close proximity to the Panjshir Valley, has made the province particularly vulnerable to attack from opposition fighters.

Masood and his forces retreated to the Panjshir Valley following the fall of Kabul.

Military analysts say a Taleban loss of Asadabad would be a serious blow to the militia.

Masood has intensified anti-Taleban operations in the eastern provinces of Nangahar, Laghman and Kunar in the past month, reportedly in collaboration with Haji Qadeer, the governor of Nangahar.

Also part of the anti-Taleban alliance is northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam, and a Shiite Muslim faction based in the central Massif of the country.

Abdullah said a massive offensive against the Taleban was "imminent," and reiterated the goal of the alliance to retake Kabul once improving weather conditions take hold in the winter-beaten and war-battered land. (AFP)

# Mubarak Cautious About Mideast Peace Summits

CAIRO — Egypt opposes a full Arab summit because it could complicate Middle East peace talks, President Hosni Mubarak said in an interview broadcast on Friday.

Even a small peace summit between Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian and Egyptian leaders depends on Israeli willingness to reconsider its settlement policy in Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, he told the Good Morning Egypt program on state television.

Asked if he thought the time was right for a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, he said: We have no objection, if that's going to solve the problem... but the prime minister of Israel must have come to remove the causes of the present dispute.

I don't want to say it in detail but he knows this. (If he) removes the causes of the present dispute, I've no objection after that to call a summit in Cairo attended by the prime minister of Israel, King Hussein (of Jordan), Yasser Arafat and we could talk about this subject in coordination with the United States as sponsor of the peace process.

Mubarak repeated the Arab view that the main cause of the crisis in peace talks is Netanyahu's decision to go ahead with building housing for Jews on a hill in the half of Bait-ul-Moqaddas occupied in 1967.

That's the crux. That's what stirred up the present problem. That's what created the lack of trust in the Israeli government on the part of the Arab and Muslim peoples, he said.

On the Arab Summit, he said: There are people who call for it but what's the point... I personally am not in favor of holding a summit now because it could take a position which complicates things.

We don't want to complicate things, we want to simplify things. Let the summit meet when there's something clear and the door has been completely shut and there's no way out of holding an Arab summit.

Syria and Libya are among Arab states in favor of a summit to take a strong line against Israel. (Reuter)

# Kuwait to Hold Naval War Games With Allies

KUWAIT CITY — British, American, French and Kuwaiti naval forces began five days of exercises on Saturday that will include war games at sea and live-fire practice, a British Naval officer said.

"The most important (objective of the exercise) is to increase the inter-operability of all coalition and allied forces within the Persian Gulf," Commander Duncan Potts told reporters.

The five-day exercise, codenamed Eager Sentry, officially began on Saturday and will involve war games and live-fire training at sea starting today, Potts said aboard the destroyer HMS Southampton in Kuwait's main port.

Taking part alongside the British destroyer are a U.S. frigate and minesweeper, a French frigate and a Kuwaiti fast patrol boat and coastal craft. Kuwaiti jet fighters will also join in with simulated air attacks.

HMS Southampton exercised with forces from the United Arab Emirates and Oman earlier this year, while maneuvers with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain will be held in May. (AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

## ISLAMIC...

Since Islam is a revealed religion and since Prophet Mohammad (S) was the last and greatest of divine messengers, the all-wise Almighty deemed it necessary to designate his vicegerent so as not to leave the affairs of mankind to the whims of fallible minds.

On completion of the Holy Prophet's sermon, the following verse was revealed as proof of completion of divine favor:

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my favor on you... (5:3)

Elaborating on divine favor for mankind Ayatollah Khamenei said the legitimacy of Iran's Islamic system lies in Eid-ul-Ghadir, and the secret behind the might and power of the country is the strong link between the system and people.

He noted that despite the plot of the Americans and Zionists to embroil the European Union with Iran, the world was witnessing the strength of the Islamic system of Iran. Officials and people from various walks of life have stood firmly like mountains against the plot, and thanks to the Almighty, Iran's firmness and indifference towards such threats have defeated the U.S. and the Zionists.

The Leader said that confidence, trust, bonds and kindness were some of the reciprocal features and that Iranian officials and people should honor according to the concept of *Velayat*.

He expressed confidence that all enemy propaganda would prove ineffective vis-a-vis the Qoranic and divine system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He hoped that Iran's Islamic system would grab the chance to consolidate bases of Islamic civilization in the country and in all the Islamic lands.

Earlier, President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in a brief speech congratulated the audience on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Ghadir and lauded the day as historical and a gift bestowed on the mankind by the Almighty God.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

## GENERAL...

tiate the final status of the holy city. Israel considers Bait-ul-Moqaddas its undivided capital.

An earlier Arab draft recommended a ban on trade with Israeli groups directly involved in settlement construction. But they agreed to soften the language to win support from European nations and Japan, which voted for it.

Japanese Ambassador Hisashi Owada said his government believed that a resolution "containing collective measures" would not "necessarily be the best way to push the peace process forward."

Meanwhile according to another report Israel on Saturday rejected the UN General Assembly resolution condemning its settlement building in annexed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, while the Palestinians and Arab states celebrated "victory."

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said: "This resolution will be rescinded, like that of the UN General Assembly (in November 1975) which equated Zionism with a form of racism."

Levy earlier told Israel radio that the resolution "does not help peace efforts and can not contribute toward resolving the disputes, which should be the object of direct negotiations between the parties concerned."

But Palestinian officials, who have little hope of securing concessions from Israel's hardline government, said the United Nations had given the Arab-Israeli peace process a massive boost after a month of crisis.

"The resolutions demonstrates the international desire to put the peace process back on track by stopping unilateral Israeli measures such as the construction at Abu Ghneim," said the chief Palestinian negotiator with Israel, Saeb Erakat.

"It's a clear message that the world supports the Palestinian cause," Erakat said after a Palestinian cabinet meeting in the West Bank town of Jericho. (AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

## HAMAS...

yahu has refused to do.

Netanyahu in turn insists Arafat clamp down on radical anti-Israeli groups such as the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) as a precondition for further talks.

Zahar said that Hamas has been in contact with Arafat's self-rule government since he convened various Palestinian factions for "national dialogue" in February, and that the group has formally asked him to "freeze his security cooperation with Israel.

"Whether the Israeli government is formed by Likud or Labor, we cannot expect any presents from it," Zahar said.

"We will never recover an inch of Bait-ul-Moqaddas through negotiations. It's only through force that we will liberate the holy city and all of Palestine," he said. (AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

## CILLER...

Her remarks came amid the resignation of two cabinet ministers belonging to her True Path Party and as the military-dominated National Security Council prepared to meet to discuss the future of the government.

Industry and Commerce Minister Yalim Erez and Health Minister Yildirim Aktuna announced their resignations earlier Saturday saying that Erbakan's policies were a threat to democracy.

Ciller on Friday denied a press report that she would pull out of the ruling coalition with Islamists.

Don't believe things about withdrawing from the government that you haven't heard from me, Ciller told reporters after a party leadership meeting.

The *Yeni Yuzyil* daily on Friday quoted unnamed cabinet ministers as saying Ciller, also the foreign minister, had decided to pull her True Path Party out of the 10-month-old government over a growing dispute between the Islamists and the army.

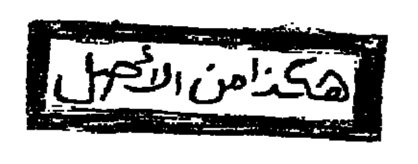
Turkish stocks, little changed in early trade on Friday, dropped 4.9 percent on Thursday on fears of an end to the alliance between Ciller and Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, Turkey's first Islamist leader.

Erbakan was to face the generals at a meeting of the National Security Council on Saturday that has been billed as a showdown.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

## LEADER...

**The clemency, proposed by Chief of the Judiciary Branch Ayatollah Mohammadi Yazdi, was approved by the Leader.**



# Trouble-Plagued Fujimori Enjoys Moment of Glory

LIMA — Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori's torrid seven years in power read like a litany of Latin America's traditional woes.

Communist guerrillas, drug traffickers, a restless military, runaway inflation and economic chaos — not to mention a messy divorce — have plagued him since day one in government palace.

But those troubles merely steeled Fujimori's resolve for his biggest trial of all — a 126-day showdown with Marxist hostage-takers that ended on Tuesday.

The bloody but ultimately triumphant storming of the besieged residence to release all but one of the Tupac Amaru rebels' 72 VIP hostages has given the Peruvian leader a brief moment of glory and respite.

But, analysts warn, new problems may soon dull the luster.

The military's spectacular success in flushing out the guerrillas has left Fujimori even more indebted to an already powerful armed forces on whom he is forced to rely for a power base, they said.

But will security chiefs now seek to make their influence in government felt further?

And the underlying problems that arguably gave rise to the guerrilla movements — social inequality and political instability — will also remain long after the 14 slain rebels' bodies are cleared away, the analysts added.

Poverty still afflicts about half of this nation of 24 million, while high unemployment rates and low wage levels have persisted despite Fujimori's taming of the out-of-control economy he inherited.

That, many say, provides fertile recruiting territory for the Mrta and Peru's far larger, other guerrilla movement, the Maoist Shining Path.

If we do not achieve social justice and build real peace, who can say that there will not be youngsters waiting to follow in (Nestor) Cerpa's footsteps? asked Peruvian guerrilla analyst Carlos Tapia.

It was Cerpa who led the Mrta band's triumphant assault on the residence, where for 126 days the rebels held their captives to demand the release of jailed comrades. They also took advantage of world attention to Harangue Fujimori as a dictator with no concern for the poor.

Ironically, or perhaps deliberately according to cynics, the surprise assault came two days after Fujimori tumbled to his lowest approval rating since taking power in 1990.

That new low of 38 percent shot up overnight to 67 percent, according to Peru's leading polling agency Apoyo Sa. Fujimori's disapproval rating fell to 22 percent, from 47 percent four days ago.

There is clearly support — whether it lasts or not — for how the president has dealt with the conflict, Apoyo director Alfredo Torres said, adding that 84 percent approved of the assault on the residence.

Two soldiers also died in the 40-minute gun battle, although commandos confounded predictions of a bloodbath. The military action drew praise from all over the world, giving Fujimori an instant boost in his international standing.

Amid the euphoria, Argentine President Carlos Menem struck a note of caution, warning how it could all have ended in tragedy: everything went fine. Everybody is applauding. If things had gone bad, they would have called him irresponsible.

While clearly ecstatic at the end of more than four months of personal torment — wrestling with the dilemma of how to rescue captives who included his own brother — Fujimori has been careful not to appear over-triumphant.

In stark contrast with previous landmark victories against leftist guerrillas, he has not exulted over his enemies but rather warned they could strike again. Prior to the Mrta's takeover of the residence, he had proclaimed them dead.

Fujimori's attitude has been applauded in Peru, where commentators have urged him to take advantage of his new political success to steer the nation forward.

The successful rescue gives the government a new political spring, a new period of truce, said columnist Luis Gonzalez del Valle Napuri. But this is precisely the moment not to rest on laurels but rather to take advantage and channel the positive impulse in favor Peru's economic and social development.

*(Reuter)*

GAZA, Gaza Strip (April 22): A Palestinian pilgrim (C) is greeted at the Israeli controlled Rafah border between Gaza Strip and Egypt by a relative after his return from the pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. Israeli army arrested a 42 year Palestinian pilgrim at Rafah on the basis that he is a member of the Islamic Jihad. It has also arrested some 25 Palestinians in Gaza Strip.

(AFP PHOTO)

# India's Next PM Can Survive Indian Political Minefield

NEW DELHI — Inder Kumar Gujral will be better equipped to pick his way through the Indian political minefield than the country's previous prime minister, an analyst said.

Kalim Bahadur, professor at Jawarharlal Nehru University, said that the foreign minister's highly-rated qualities as a manager might even help him survive as India's leader until the next scheduled general elections in 2001.

"He is a person who can manage the United Front's disparate parties," he said. "That was something Deve Gowda wasn't good at," he said.

"He may be able to go through the entire term. From the United Front's perspective, it's a change for the better."

Gujral, a former diplomat and India's three-time foreign minister, was chosen by the United Front coalition, comprising 13 leftist, centrist and regional parties, on Saturday as its new head.

He is expected to become prime minister soon.

Deve Gowda headed the previous minority front administration until its fall on April 11 after just 10 months in power.

Bahadur said he had never been able to cope with the nightmare of keeping all 13 parties — as well as the Congress Party which kept the front in power with outside support — satisfied.

Of Gujral he added: "He's more of an intellectual type. He may not be able to talk like Deve Gowda and come up with populist slogans but he may be able to run the government better by good management.

"He's not a fiery speaker but, compared to the "humble farmer", he's persuasive — that can be equally effective.

"His only shortfall is that he does not have a political base of his own."

The 77-year-old Gujral, a former diplomat, would bring a left-of-center slant to the leadership and a stronger focus on foreign affairs, he predicted.

"Make no mistake about it — he's left of center. He has said himself that he thinks the left-of-centre way is the best for the country."

But he expected no major policy shifts, adding that coalition government "will always be a bargain, a compromise, a managing of contradictions."

Gujral's minority government, like Gowda's, will rely on outside Congress Party support to survive.

J. N. Dixit, a former Indian foreign secretary, said of Gujral: "He is an ex-congressman so I presume he would have good relations with the Congress and also with the left and center parties."

He also underlined Gujral's powers of diplomacy.

"He is a gentleman who has been in politics for 40 to 50 years.

He has been foreign minister three times — one could say he is a man of judgement. *(AFP)*

# New Indian Leader Faces Old Rivalries

NEW DELHI — India's new government is almost a carbon copy of its short-lived predecessor and faces many of the same pitfalls that abruptly ended the nation's most ambitious experiment in coalition politics.

But analysts said the New Prime Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral, may possess the diplomatic skills needed to prolong the center-left government's lifespan beyond the mere 10 months of the previous government.

Gujral on Monday named a 35-member cabinet that included all but five members of former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda's ousted government.

Four of the five, including former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, belong to the Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC) Party, which in a fit of pique decided not to join the government after its leader, G. K. Moopanar, lost the race for prime minister.

Gujral's look-alike cabinet showed his keen desire to project a sense of continuity. It is business as usual, Gujral told industry leaders in his maiden policy speech on Monday.

But it also reflected the constraints Gujral faces as he tries to balance the often divergent interests of the 15 parties in his alliance and those of its vital ally, the Congress Party.

Gujral's greatest asset in the frantic race to become the United Front's leader was his lack of political enemies. As the heavyweight political chieftans squared off, Gujral emerged as the natural consensus choice.

Now in power, the two-time foreign minister will need all his diplomatic skills to keep the minority coalition intact.

The chances of an eventual tug-of-war between Gujral and some of the UF leaders cannot be discounted, the *Indian Express* newspaper said.

His first challenge was to bring back the TMC.

The party, based in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, is one of the alliance's biggest components.

Gujral wants chidambaram in his cabinet because he is the alliance's economic Czar.

The departure of the TMC would be a blow to the unity of the alliance. More worrisome would be a linkup between Congress and the TMC, which Moopanar and Chidambaram founded last year after breaking away from Congress, the nation's oldest party.

With the TMC's 20 deputies, Congress, which now has 140 votes in the Lower House, would outstrip the United Front.

A move by the TMC towards Congress also would antagonize the four left-wing parties in Gujral's coalition that still have trouble accepting the notion that the alliance depends on Congress support.

The United Front and Congress, told by President Shankar Dayal Sharma to prove the new coalition would be more stable than its predecessor, have agreed a joint panel to improve communication.

Also, Gujral and Congress chief Sitaram Kesri will meet to thrash out any problems. A former Congressman, Gujral has the kind of warm relations with Kesri that Deve Gowda never enjoyed.

But the prospect of the United Front having to accept the views of Congress did not sit well with the left, which suspects Kesri of plotting to bring down the alliance once again.

*(Reuter)*

# Ottawa Packs Its Bags in Anticipation of a General Election

OTTAWA — In theory, Canada's Parliament resumes its current session this week. But even the speaker of the House of Commons, Gil Parent, could not hide his anticipation Friday of a June 2 snap election.

Most political pundits believe Prime Minister Jean Chretien will announce that the election will be held on June 2.

The house was even emptier than usual for a Friday as MP's gathered for what they expect to be their last working session for several months.

At the end of the daily question period, Parent noted: "Colleagues, this would bring to a close the question period today.

Notwithstanding the fact that I do not have any more information than you have, it is possible that this question period was the last for this parliamentary session.

"If this is the case, I want to thank you very much for serving this parliament and Canada... "

Technically, Chretien — who won the October 1993 general election with a landslide — does not need to call a new election until October 1998.

But with his popularity slipping as his government fails to fullfil its election pledge to create "jobs, jobs, job," the prime minister has decided to call a snap election.

Even though the national jobless rate is still hovering near the 10 percent mark, Chretien is counting on the disarray among the opposition parties to ensure him of a new five-year mandate.

He received a boost Friday when ekos research associates said its latest poll, taken earlier this month, showed that 50.1 percent of Canadian voters intend to support the liberals.

Although this is down from the 52.6 percent support Ekos reported for the liberals in November, it is still well ahead of the second-placed progressive Conservative Party which is currently enjoying just 14.7 percent support (up from 13.1 percent in November).

Ekos has consistently given the Liberals a far greater support level than other opinion pollsters who generally credit Chretien and his party with 42-44 percent support nationally.

But the spread between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives has remained consistent among all polls of recent months.

The Populist Reform Party is placed third by Ekos with a rating of 12.8 percent (11.9 percent in November) with the bloc Quebecois in fourth place with 9.7 percent (down from 11.2 percent) and the New Democratic Party trailing with 7.8 percent (up from 7.6 percent).

In Canada, each parliamentary seat is awarded to the candidate with the highest number of votes, not necessarily 50 percent.

*(AFP)*

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### Sheikh's Coffin Refuses to Go to Cemetery

*CAIRO — An Egyptian cleric "chose" his own burial place after he died when his coffin mysteriously refused to go to the local cemetery and instead came to rest in a field.*

*Villagers in Abig, north of Cairo, tried to carry the coffin of Sheikh Abdel Rahman Mohammad Sayed to the cemetery when it "suddenly changed direction and they could do nothing about it," the government weekly Akhbar al-Yom said.*

*"The coffin came to rest in a field which the Sheikh's father owned before selling it to a farmer. None could budge it an inch," the paper said.* (AFP)

### 1 Killed, 5 Injured as Women Neighbors Clash

*DHAKA — One woman was killed and five others injured when neighbours picked up brooms and sticks to settle a dispute in northern Bangladesh, a newspaper reported.*

*In the clash Thursday one group of women went to free their friend, held captive by the other group.*

*The fight, the origin of which was unclear, left Umeda Khatun, 45, dead, the mass circulation Ittefaq newspaper reported.*

*Khatun died after she was struck on the head with a stick during the clash in Bogra's Sinatola area, the report said.* (AFP)

# Clinton, Hashimoto Discuss Security Issues, N.Korea

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto on Friday discussed security issues, including North Korea, where the Japanese leader said food shortages are "extremely grave."

And both leaders urged the closed N.Korea to join historic peace negotiations with arch-rival South Korea.

Clinton also assured that Washington was moving "in good faith" to ease the burden of U.S. military bases on Japan's southern prefecture of Okinawa, where resentment toward the heavy concentration of U.S. military facilities has surged since 1995.

"The United States is very aware that our presence ... has imposed burdens on the people of Okinawa," Clinton said in a joint press conference.

He thanked Hashimoto for winning passage in the Japanese legislature for a measure allowing the U.S. military to continue to use land in Okinawa despite opposition from local landowners.

Okinawa houses more than half of the 47,000 American troops in Japan and accounts for about 75 percent of U.S. military facilities in Japan.

Both Clinton and Hashimoto urged North Korea to enter historic four-party peace talks with the capitalist South. (AFP)

# U.S., China Register Chemical Treaty Ratifications

UNITED NATIONS — The United States and China were among seven countries that deposited with the United Nations on Friday their instruments of ratification of the chemical weapons convention.

The others were Bangladesh, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Togo and Zimbabwe.

This brings to 81 the number of countries that have so far ratified the treaty designed to outlaw the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons worldwide.

The convention, which has been signed by 164 countries, enters into force on next Tuesday.

American UN Envoy Bill Richardson deposited the U.S. ratification less than 24 hours after the U.S. Senate approved the treaty late on Thursday by a vote of 74 to 26, seven more than the required two-thirds majority.

Other countries that have ratified the accord include Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. (Reuter)

## A-10 Pilot Was in Warplane When It Crashed

EAGLE, Colorado — Searchers found body parts among the wreckage of a missing A-10 warplane, indicating the pilot was in the cockpit when it crashed into a mountain, the air force said.

"What we found was fragmentary human remains," Maj. Gen. Nels Running said Friday. "We are not positive whose human remains they are."

A military lab will conduct DNA and other tests to determine if the remains are those of Capt. Craig Button, Running said.

The announcement culminated a three-week search for Button's plane after he veered away during a training run on April 2. (AP)

# Fujimori Denies Commandos Intentionally Executed Rebels During Rescue

LIMA, Peru — President Alberto Fujimori has denied that Peruvian commandos intentionally executed Tupac Amaru rebels who allegedly tried to surrender during a military raid to free 72 hostages.

"That's not true," he said in an interview with the Associated Press Friday night at the government palace.

Fujimori said he didn't believe newspaper reports that some of the slain rebels had thrown up their hands and expressed a desire to surrender. But he said that in such raids commandos assume that everybody is armed and dangerous regardless of their expressed intentions.

"The target was to release all the hostages, and action was so fast that during the operation there was no time to see any kind of reflection," he said, speaking in English.

Peruvian commandos blew their way into the heavily fortified Japanese ambassador's residence Tuesday afternoon and freed 71 of the 72 hostages. One hostage died of a heart attack after being wounded.

All 14 rebels were killed, as were two of the 140 special forces commandos. (AP)



LIMA, Peru (April 23): Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, using a scale model of the Japanese ambassador's residence, explains how the raid on the residence was carried out April 22 by Peruvian special forces. (AFP PHOTO)

# 10 Die as Strike Hits Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India — Ten people were killed in violence in the Kashmir valley as a strike called by separatists to denounce alleged atrocities by Indian troops crippled the troubled state Saturday.

Four members of one Muslim family were shot dead by suspected militants at a village about 30 kilometers (18 miles) from here overnight when they refused to give the rebels shelter, police said.

The victims included a man, two women and a child. Hundreds of furious villagers held a demonstration in the village on Saturday to protest against the killings.

Indian troops shot dead three members of the Al Barq militant group at Kapwara, 90 kilometers (56 miles) north of Srinagar, on Thursday, the police said.

But the rebels alleged the three were killed after their arrest. Three others, including a separatist guerrilla, were killed elsewhere in the Himalayan state.

The Kashmir valley was paralyzed Saturday by a militant-sponsored strike to denounce alleged atrocities by Indian security forces. (AFP)

# Pope in Prague Warns Against Western Hedonism

PRAGUE — Pope John Paul holds a mass with young people on Saturday to mark the 1,000th anniversary of a saint's death after starting a visit to the Czech Republic with a stern warning against hedonism imported from the West.

The 76-year-old pontiff travels to the town of Hradec Kralove, some 100 km (60 miles) east of Prague to commemorate St Adalbert, the first bishop of Czech origin who took the gospel to Poland and is seen by Catholics as a symbol of European Christian unity.

But the Pope, on his third trip to Prague since the fall of communism, said on Friday that Czechs faced a grave social malaise as they built a free market economy after more than 40 years of communism.

In a speech to Czech bishops in the Vatican's Prague Embassy the Pope criticized hedonism, which has invaded these lands from neighboring countries, and contributed to a growing crisis of values in everyday life.

He said Czech society faced danger from the infiltration of certain ideas already widespread in the West. (Reuter)

# Hotel Fire in Southern Philippines Kills 27

COTABATO, Philippines — Twenty-seven people were killed and 15 injured when fire swept through a packed hotel in this southern Philippine city Saturday, officials said.

The fire started in the Muslim prayer room on the third floor of the six story Imperial Hotel around 1:00 a.m. (1700 GMT Friday), city fire marshal Edzrapel Delawangan said. The blaze lasted two hours and gutted the building's third and sixth floors.

The bodies of six females and 13 males had been identified, the officials said, while eight other corpses were charred beyond recognition.

Most of the bodies were found wrapped in bedsheets inside bathrooms, while others were beside doors or sprawled along hallways, firefighters said.

Some of the survivors were injured when they jumped from their windows to the ground.

The dead included civil servants and officials of the former insurgent Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) who were staying at the modern three-star hotel.

MNLF leader Nur Misuari, who struck a truce with the government last year and is now governor of a Muslim autonomous region including Cotabato, immediately cancelled a visit to the city during which he was to make a major public address Monday. Many of the guests at the fully-booked hotel were in the city to hear him speak. (AFP)

KINSHASA, Zaire (April 23): Nzanga Mobutu, the son of President Mobutu Sese Seko, shakes hand with a journalist during a press conference, in Kinshasa where he confirmed that Mobutu will not go to South Africa for talks with rebel leader, Laurent-Desire Kabila. The president's son said Kabila had proposed Lubumbashi, Zaire's second city, now in rebel hands like half the vast African nation, as the venue for the meeting. (AFP PHOTO)

# Burma Accuses U.S. of Interference in ASEAN Affairs

BANGKOK — Burma Saturday accused the United States of blatant interference in the internal affairs of both Rangoon and ASEAN after Washington urged members to reject Burma's bid for entry to the regional grouping.

A senior Burmese government official assailed U.S. foreign policy as "inconsistent" and U.S. concerns over human rights as "hypocrisy" after Washington frankly declared the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) should not admit the military-run state.

"The U.S. is blatantly interfering not only in Myanmar's but also in the ASEAN organization's internal affairs as well," the Burmese government official said, referring to Burma by its official name of Myanmar.

ASEAN members Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam are expected to admit Burma, along with Cambodia and Laos, at either their annual foreign ministers' meeting in July or an informal summit in December.

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns Friday said in Washington that the United States was "trying to use our influence to make the point that Burma should be given a stiff message that it is not welcome."

It followed the announcement Tuesday of a U.S. ban on new investment in Burma by U.S. businesses, citing the military regime's authoritarian tactics, in particular its attempt to silence Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

Malaysian Premier Mahathir Mohamad, whose country currently chairs the association Wednesday said the U.S. decision to impose sanctions would not affect the drive for Burma's membership. (AFP)

**EXTENSION DATE OF TENDER NO. 67002**

**THIS IS TO INFORM ALL THE BIDDERS THAT THE CLOSING DATE OF UNDERMENTIONED TENDER NO. 67002 IS EXTENDED TO 14-5-97.**

## INVITATION FOR BIDS
## TENDER NO. 67002

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE 8,000 M/T GRAPHITE ELECTRODE WITH THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BULK DENSITY | $1.65\text{-}1.76\ g/cm^3$ | CHEMICAL COMPONENT |
| POROSITY | 20-27% | C=96-98% |
| SPECIFIC RESISTANCE | $4\text{-}6.5\ \mu\Omega m$ | P=0.1% |
| BENDING STRENGTH | $110\text{-}140\ N/cm^2$ | S=0.1% |
| YOUNG'S MODULUS | $7.8\text{-}12.7\ KN/mm^2$ | |
| COEFFICIENT OF THERMAL EXPANSION | $(0.3\text{-}1)\times10^{-6}/°C$ | |
| ASH CONTENT | 0.2% | |
| DIAMETER | 608-612 mm | |
| LENGTH | 2275-2475 mm | |
| SPECIFICATIONS FOR NIPPLES | | |
| DIAMETER | 317.5 mm | |
| LENGTH | 475.5 mm | |
| SPECIFICATIONS FOR TRANSFORMER | | |
| PRIMARY: | | |
| RATED POWER | 78.4 MVA | |
| VOLTAGE | 33 KV | |
| SECONDARY: | | |
| VOLTAGE | 230-581 V | |
| CURRENT | 83 KA (MAXIMUM) | |

INTERESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY THE SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NONREFUNDABLE FEE OF U.S.$1,000 "ONE THOUSAND" IN THE ACCOUNT NO. 8313 AT EDB BANK TEHRAN CENTRAL BRANCH AND PRESENTATION THE CASH RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING LOCATION.

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY
KM 10 OF AHWAZ-BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD
P.O. BOX 1378 POST CODE 61335
AHWAZ - IRAN
FOREIGN CONTRACT DEPT.
FAX: 228873 - 210528
TEL: (061) 225880
TLX: 612003 - 612004

ALL BIDS MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE ABOVE OFFICE ON OR BEFORE 14-5-97.

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY

**EXTENSION DATE OF TENDER NO. 67001**

**THIS IS TO INFORM ALL THE BIDDERS THAT THE CLOSING DATE OF UNDERMENTIONED TENDER NO. 67001 IS EXTENDED TO 12-5-97.**

## INVITATION FOR BIDS
## TENDER NO. 67001

**KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE 3,050,000 MT DRY IRON ORE PELLETS FED WITH FOLLOWING CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS.**

| QUANTITY | 1,650,000 MT | 1,400,000 MT |
|---|---|---|
| A) CHEMICAL SPEC. | | |
| Fet | 67.8 Min | 67.5 Min |
| $SiO_2$ | 1.0 Max | 1.3 Max |
| $Al_2O_3$ | 0.5 Max | 0.5 Max |
| CaO | 0.03 - | 0.05 - |
| MgO | 0.04 - | 0.05 - |
| S | 0.0-5 Max | 0.005 Max |
| P | 0.035 Max | 0.035 Max |
| L.O.I | 1.2 Max | 1.2 Max |
| Moisture | 5 Max | 8 Max |
| B) PHYSTICAL SPEC. | | |
| +1 mm | 2 Max | — |
| −1 mm | 95 Min | — |
| − 45 U | 40-50 | 80-85 |
| Blaine $cm^2/gr$ | 500-800 | 1800 - Min |

INTERESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY THE SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NONREFUNDABLE FEE OF U.S.$1,000 "ONE THOUSAND" IN THE ACCOUNT NO. 8313 AT EDB BANK TEHRAN CENTRAL BRANCH AND PRESENTATION THE CASH RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING LOCATION.

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ALL BIDS MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE ABOVE OFFICE ON OR BEFORE 12-5-97.

# Tasmania Tries to Come to Terms With Massacre 12 Months Later

HOBART, Australia — Marriages have foundered, people have been unable to return to work, the local economy is limping and, for most, the memory will never fade of a crisp spring Sunday a year ago when madness came to Tasmania.

It took less than two minutes for a simple-minded man with a grudge and a bag of automatic weapons to murder 20 people and wound seven more in the broad Arrow Cafe of historic Port Arthur convict settlement on April 28, 1996.

***It took less than two minutes for a simple- minded man with a grudge and a bag of automatic weapons to murder 20 people and wound seven more in the broad Arrow Cafe of historic Port Arthur convict settlement on April 28, 1996.***

By next day when police grabbed Martin Bryant, 29, as he fled a blazing guest-house where he had held siege, he had taken another 15 lives, bringing the toll to 35, and devastated hundreds more from the island state and far beyond.

They included the 18 he wounded, the survivors, the bereaved relatives, the workmates of the victims, the friends and even the professionals who attended the scene of the world's worst massacre by a lone thrill-killer.

Three police officers deeply scarred by the trauma have quit the force and another four are still undergoing managed treatment programs.

Bryant is now in Hobart's Risdon Prison where he will spend the rest of his life after pleading guilty to 72 charges, but his murderous rampage created a psychological disaster with which Tasmanians are still coming to terms.

"There's no map for this one," said Tasman council community recovery coordinator Susan Parr. It was not, she said, like Dunblane where another mass killer called Thomas Hamilton took 17 lives and then killed himself.

Parr, who is helping develop a long-term community recovery plan, said in many cases, people had struggled to hold their lives together in the lead-up to milestones such as Bryant's first court appearance on September 30. Then he pleaded not guilty.

"I felt the community collectively go to its knees," she said.

It rallied when Bryant changed his plea on November 7, although the sentencing hearing was extremely difficult, Parr said.

Grief counsellors in the court for the two days of the hearing focused on getting people through the ordeal.

***"I'm absolutely dreading the anniversary because I think a lot of people who've been holding on are going to find it really difficult to keep doing that."***

The counsellors were back during the pre-Christmas fortnight and they are back again now for what is likely to be the toughest day — the first anniversary of the massacre on Monday.

"I'm absolutely dreading the anniversary because I think a lot of people who've been holding on are going to find it really difficult to keep doing that," Parr said.

"We would like people to think about the people who were killed, but also to acknowledge the effort that's been put into the community and keeping that going for a year. That's been a huge effort."

Constable Pat Allen, who spent eight hours pinned down in a ditch as Bryant fired indiscriminately from the guesthouse, had to take six months off work to help him put the events into perspective.

He has had problems since, but is now confident he will cope.

"I've got a single-minded determination to stay as a police officer," he said.

Constable Debbie May, who tagged bodies for seven hours followed by three 12-hour shifts at the mortuary photographing postmortems, had a four-month overseas holiday to help her recover.

"I don't think anything could have prepared us for what we had, no amount of training, but we coped together as a team," she said.

Bitter arguments have also developed over how to rebuild Port Arthur in the aftermath of tragedy and a community totally dependent on tourism is still trying desperately to bring back the tourists.

According to writer Margaret Scott, whose book on the massacre and the recovery "*Port Arthur: A Story of Strength and Courage*" is to be launched on Monday, the problems are "made more intense because of the events of April 28." (AFP)

*ENVIRONMENTALISTS:*

# Earth Summit II Could Be Waste of Time

UNITED NATIONS — A major environmental conference to be attended by world government leaders could be a waste of time following the failure of a preparatory conference here, ecological activists warned Friday.

Greenpeace International representative Clifton Curtis said here that with world leaders expected to speak at the June 23-27 UN General Assembly session on the environment, "what they will be saying will be pretty useless, meaningless."

"People will not see the kind of bold actions that the current situation requires," he said.

Curtis was commenting as a three-week preparatory conference wound up here without agreement on the main issues which are to be the subject of a General Assembly resolution in June.

Conference chairman Mostafa Tolba of Egypt admitted at a separate news conference that the main document being negotiated here until Friday was still not complete, amid dissensions mainly between the industrialized and developing nations.

Negotiators will have five days on the UN session sidelines in June to finalize the document.

Curtis noted that in one group focusing on energy, the European Union had been prepared to set deadlines on ending fossil fuel subsidies.

But oil-producers Iran, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela blocked the move, he said. "Those kinds of things, if they continue to do that come June 23, the political declaration and program of action might as well be filed in the waste basket."

Curtis and other non-governmental organization representatives who attended the meeting here said they would use the remaining time before the June summit to lobby governments to commit to specific goals.

The June session has been dubbed the Earth II summit as it is to review progress from the Rio Earth Summit five years ago and chart the way ahead.

One of the main sticking points in the negotiations here was a demand from developing countries for the North to live up to a promise to transfer finances and technology to the South to help develop environmentally-sound economic practices.

"We are not going to implement anything unless there is agreement on the financing and on the transfer of resources," said Tolba.

The 172-nation Rio summit notably adopted conventions on combatting climate change, protecting wildlife and plants and curbing desertification.

But environmentalists told journalists that the preparatory session here had gone backwards, rather than forwards, from the 1992 Rio conference. Issues which have become more urgent since the Rio meeting, such as access to fresh water and forest conservation, were also not resolved here.

(AFP)

# Suspicious Package Sparks Quarantine

WASHINGTON — More than 100 workers were quarantined for eight hours at the international headquarters of B'nai B'rith after a foul-smelling package was discovered in the mail room. The FBI was investigating the incident as terrorism.

After laboratory tests allayed initial fears that the suspicious substance in a petri dish might be a deadly toxin, the workers — and several children — were finally told they could go home.

Thursday's episode snarled traffic as police cordoned off several blocks around the office building, an area that includes the Australian Embassy, a hotel and several downtown arteries.

"It is not life threatening, but we still have not determined what it is," said Thomas Pickard, head of the Washington Field Office of the FBI. He said the bureau is investigating it "as a terrorist matter."

Initial tests at the laboratory at Bethesda Naval Medical Center ruled out fears that the substance might be deadly bacteria such as anthrax, as labeling on the package suggested. Other tests were continuing.

"People held up very well under this stress," said Robin Schwartz-Kreger, a B'nai B'rith spokeswoman. She said volunteers outside the building went to local grocery stores and brought back a meal of gefilte fish, matzo and cream cheese that police handed to people on the inside.

Two workers in the office building's mail room discovered the suspicious package and called authorities just after noon.

FBI spokeswoman Susan Lloyd said the package contained a red liquid in a petri dish that was emitting a foul odor. The petri dish reportedly had the word "anthrachs" on it — an apparent misspelling of anthrax, the deadly bacterial disease.

The dish also bore the word, "yersinia," which is the bacterium that causes bubonic plague.

"We have this container that looks like a petri dish (with) a couple of scientific terms on it. ... It could be strawberry jell-o, it could be beef bouillon; so we don't know at this point," Lloyd said.

One man, a security guard at the building, was taken to a hospital complaining of dizziness, but officials said he had not come into contact with the package.

Fourteen others, including a dozen emergency personnel, were hosed down at the site with a water and chlorine solution to decontaminate them.

The site was cordoned off, and the 108 people in the building were told they could not leave until lab tests were conducted on the package. Among them were five children whose parents had brought them to work on a day when school-age children were encouraged to make such visits.

The kids "were great. They were unbelievably happy and pleasant," said Schwartz-Kreger.

The B'nai B'rith headquarters has heavy security and routinely screens packages coming into its mailroom. In 1977 it was one of three buildings seized by a dozen gunmen who took more than 100 hostages. A radio reporter was killed at City Hall in the initial takeover, but the captors released their hostages after 38 hours. The gunmen said they were avenging the murders of seven members of a sect in 1973 in the nation's capital. (AP)

# 63-Year-Old Mother Stirs Debate Over Age Limit on Pregnancies

LOS ANGELES — Reports this week that a 63-year-old woman gave birth to a healthy baby girl have sparked a nationwide debate over legislation on age limits for fertility treatments.

The monthly publication *Fertility and Sterility* reported Thursday that the woman gave birth to a baby girl late last year after receiving a donated egg from a younger woman. She is believed to be the oldest woman on the planet to have a baby.

The mother, who lied to the University of Southern California fertility program because it rejects women over 55, beat the previous record, held by an Italian woman who was 62 years and six months old when she gave birth.

Richard Paulson, head of the USC fertility program, said the 2.95-kilogram (six-pound, nine-ounce) baby girl was delivered by cesarean section at 38 weeks of pregnancy.

Modern technology "just leveled the playing field," Paulson said.

But defenders of the "Methuselah mom" point to the case of actor Tony Randall, who become a father two weeks ago at age 77.

"A lot of people will see this as a gender equity issue" and the right of a woman to have a child no matter what her age, Mary Suchenski, spokeswoman for the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), told *USA Today*.

"It's something possible but we really don't recommend a pregnancy for those women because our first concern is for the woman's health," Rosette Kooragiaw, another ASRM spokeswoman, told AFP.

"Before taking such a decision," Kooragiaw added, "you (also) have to make sure the mother can endure the psychological difficulties of a pregnancy."

Doctors are now asking what would be the appropriate age limit for pregnancies.

"I'm sure we are going to run into a biological clock as far as pregnancies are concerned," Paulson said. "But so far we have not."

U.S. fertility programs currently set their own age limits, a barrier the world's oldest mother skirted by telling USC program administrators she was 53.

Dr. Mark Sauer told the *New York Times* that it is even more difficult today to determine women's ages because many of them have had plastic surgery.

Sauer also cited the case of a British physician who lied about the age of a patient in order to enroll her in a fertility program.

In his article in fertility and sterility, Paulson wrote: "The present case underscores the difficulty in attempting to regulate the age of a recipient in oocyte donation."

(AFP)

# Britain Rain-Dances as April Showers Fall

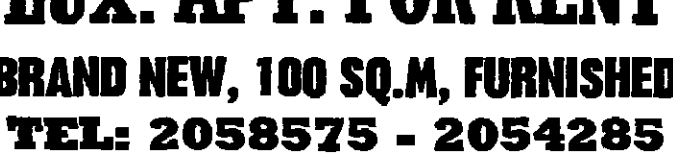
LONDON — Known the world over for miserable weather and seemingly incessant rain, Britain was Saturday dancing in the wet after the first heavy showers for months broke a dry spell that was threatening summer water shortages.

Over the past two years the south of England has seen the driest period since reliable records began — more than 250 years ago — leaving frustrated gardeners and water companies praying for rain.

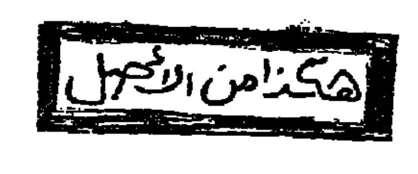
Nationwide the country has experienced 20-30 percent less rainfall than is normal.

Friday and Saturday's fall — only 0.2 millimeters, making one to two millimeters of April showers as opposed to the usual 50 millimeters (two inches) — will make little difference to the predicted water shortages. (AFP)












# Feel Better, Live Longer Without Dieting

It's Saturday morning in Beverly Hills, just before class at Richard Simmons's Slimmons fitness studio. Several women in T-shirts are on the exercise floor. This looks like a typical workout class, with one difference: most participants weigh about 200 pounds.

This is the front line of America's weight-loss culture, where Richard Simmons, the curly haired fitness dynamo, inspires his troops to sweat their way to a thinner, fitter body. "The club's open all night!" he yells. He leads the group in slow, stretching warm-ups before heating thins up with *SaturdayNight Fever* moves.

In the back I'm shimmying and sweating along with the rest. At five-foot-six and 155 pounds, I'm one of the thinnest there. Yet it's surprising how well these large women move, throwing their boidies into steps. Many seem to be in such good shape that I wonder: is it possible to be fat and also fit?

Simmons doesn't think so. "Fat kills," he says. "You go from being chubby to fat, to obese, to morbidly obese. And then there's death." Only losing weight can save people from that fate, he believes.

Most Americans agree that fat kills. Why else would we have to step on the scale whenever we visit the doctor? Why else would medical and fitness experts write popular books with such titles as *Fit or Fat* and *Weigh Less, Live Longer?*

In his 1994 report "Shape Up America," Dr. C. Everett Koop called being overweight "one of the most pervasive health threats affecting Americans today." Eight percent more Americans had become overweight since 1980, according to a 1994 study. Soon After, the Institute of Medicine in Washington, D.C., released guidelines for waging war against the nation's "epidemic of obesity."

During the past two years, two highly publicized studies boiled everything down to a simple dictum: if you want to duck heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and even some cancers, you'd better not weigh too much. "Even mild to moderate overweight is associated with a substantial increase in risk of premature death," said Dr. JoAnn Manson, a Harvard epidemiologist and author of one of those studies.

Another study that tracks the relationship of weight to overall health recently came to a different conclusion, however. Epidemiologist Steven Blair and colleagues at the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas followed 25,389 men who had checkups at the clinic between 1970 and 1989. As a group, fat men were more likely to get sick and die early than thinner ones, he found. But then Blair added physical fitness to the equation.

He found that fit, fat men lived as long as fit, thin men. And thinner men who were out of shape were nearly three times more likely to die young than fat men who were fit. In other words, once Blair factored in the men's fitness levels, their weight had no bearing on how long they lived.

This was a surprise to Blair. It made him think that Americans fret and obsess about something that may be totally irrelevant for some people: how much they weigh.

The author of numerous exercise articles published in prestigious medical journals, Blair has long been highly regarded by obesity researchers. But now he is at odds with some of them. After, all, he's found that as long as they get in good shape, people who are overweight by 20 or 30 pounds have no increased risk for mortality. And to the more than 120 million American adults who are not considered overweight, Blair issues a warning: if you don't regularly exercise — and a recent study shows almost two-thirds of us don't — being slim is no guarantee against premature death.

To reach that conclusion, Blair looked at the checkup results of the men examined at the Cooper Clinic. As part of that checkup, each subject climbed on the machine that's at the core of his research: the treadmill.

When I tried it, the pace was easy starting off; but after several minutes with the incline increasing, it became a hike up Mount Everest. The longer you can stay on the treadmill, the fitter you are, Blair says. Gasping for air, I kept it up for 21 minutes — just long enough to get a "superior" fitness rating for a woman my age, 36. And to Blair, it's that number on the treadmill, not the one on the scale, that matters most.

Up to now, most studies linking obesity to ill health did not factor in the subjects' fitness level. And that leads to mistaken results, Blair says, because although excess weight is asociated with coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and colon cancer, those are exactly the problems regular exercise can help to prevent.

(To be cont'd)

## THOUGHT

Today everything exists to end in a photograph.

*Susan Sontag*

## PRAYER

| | |
|---|---|
| Noon | 13:02 |
| Evening | 20:08 |
| Dawn (tomorrow) | 04:34 |
| Sunrise (tomorrow) | 06:16 |

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**1909** - Young Turks depose Sultan Abdul Hamid, who is succeeded by Mohammed V.

**1941** - Athens falls to German invaders after 180 days of Greek resistance in World War II.

**1950** - Communist party is outlawed in Australia. Britain recognizes Israel.

**1960** - Syngman Rhee resigns as President of South Korea. Togo becomes independent republic.

**1972** - U.S. Apollo 16 spacecraft and its three astronauts make safe landing in Pacific after journey to Moon.

**1974** - Soviet Turboprop airliner crashes after takeoff from Leningrad airport, and all 108 persons aboard are killed.

**1989** - Bangaldesh officials say at least 500 people died during rash of tornadoes and heavy rains.

**1992** - Russia and 12 other former Soviet republics win entry into the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

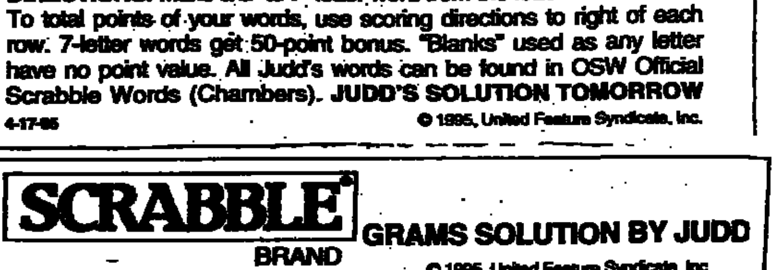
**1993** - Eritreans overwhelmingly choose independence from Ethiopia in a referendum that ratified a rebel victory in frica's longest secessionist struggle.

**1994** - The United States and six Arab oil nations join to denounce Iraq and pledge to maintain an international squeeze on Saddam Hussein's government.

## SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS

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| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P3 | P3 | S1 | M3 | U1 | H4 | C3 | | RACK 1 |
| E1 | T1 | P3 | S1 | D2 | E1 | E1 | Triple Word Score | RACK 2 |
| A1 | I1 | E1 | S1 | D2 | L1 | M3 | 1st Letter Triple | RACK 3 |
| A1 | A1 | E1 | E1 | T1 | N1 | S1 | | RACK 4 |



PAR SCORE 105-115

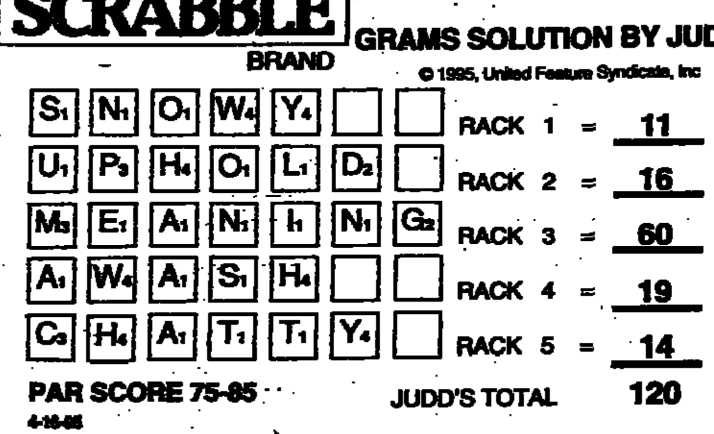
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

4-17-95





## SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD



| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | N1 | O1 | W4 | Y4 | | | RACK 1 = | 11 |
| U1 | P3 | H4 | O1 | L1 | D2 | | RACK 2 = | 16 |
| M3 | E1 | A1 | N1 | I1 | N1 | G2 | RACK 3 = | 60 |
| A1 | W4 | A1 | S1 | H4 | | | RACK 4 = | 19 |
| C3 | H4 | A1 | T1 | T1 | Y4 | | RACK 5 = | 14 |

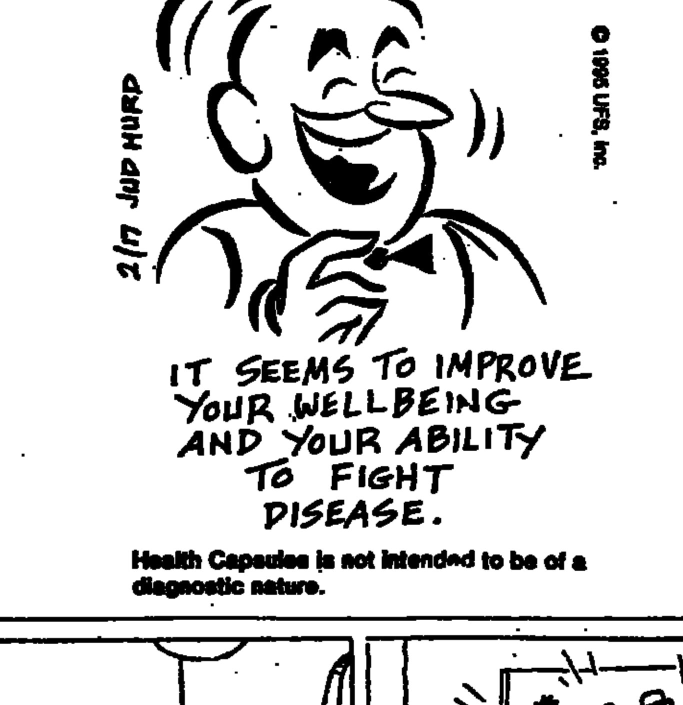
PAR SCORE 75-85 JUDD'S TOTAL 120

4-18-95



## HEALTH CAPSULES®

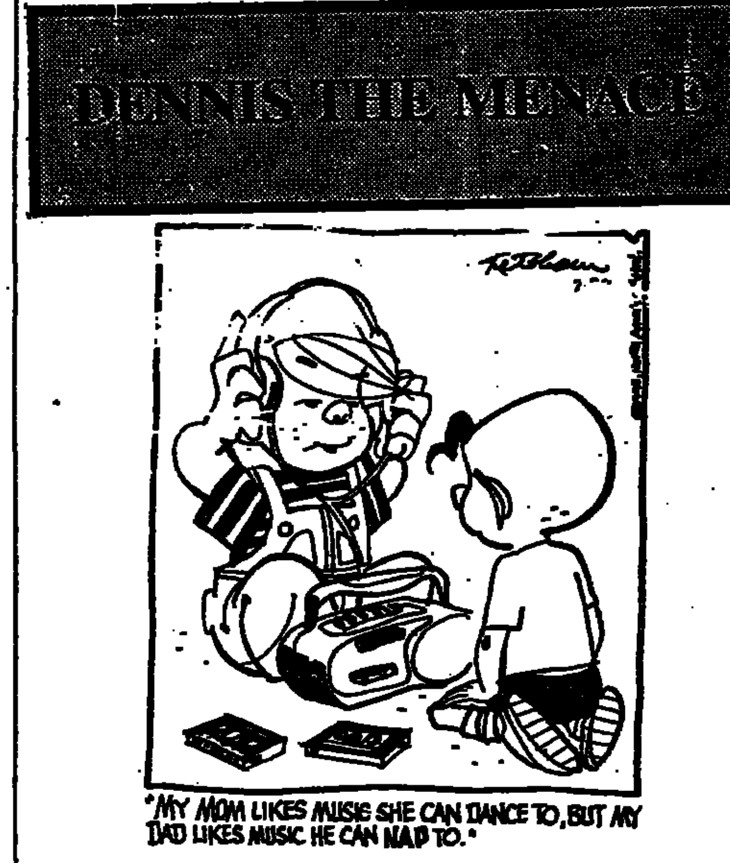
by Michael A. Petti, M.D.





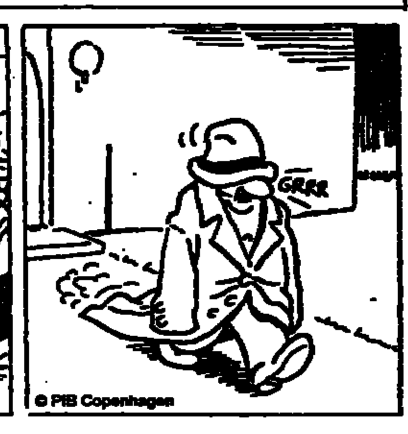
Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.

## DENNIS THE MENACE

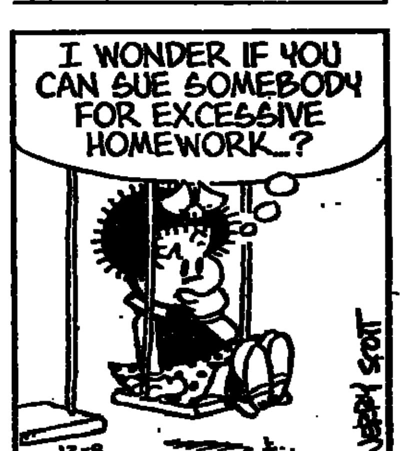


"MY MOM LIKES MUSIC SHE CAN DANCE TO, BUT MY DAD LIKES MUSIC HE CAN NAP TO."



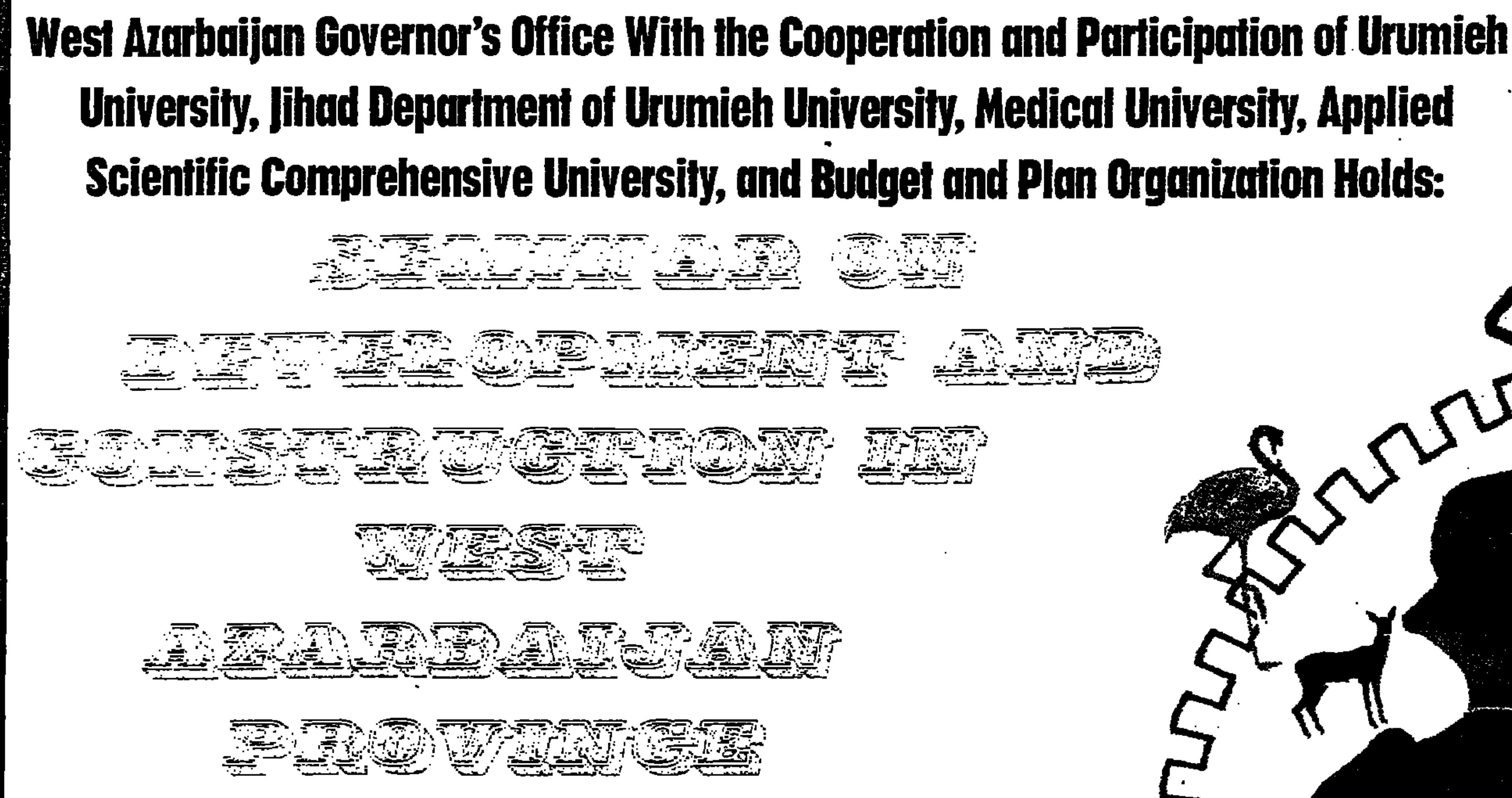


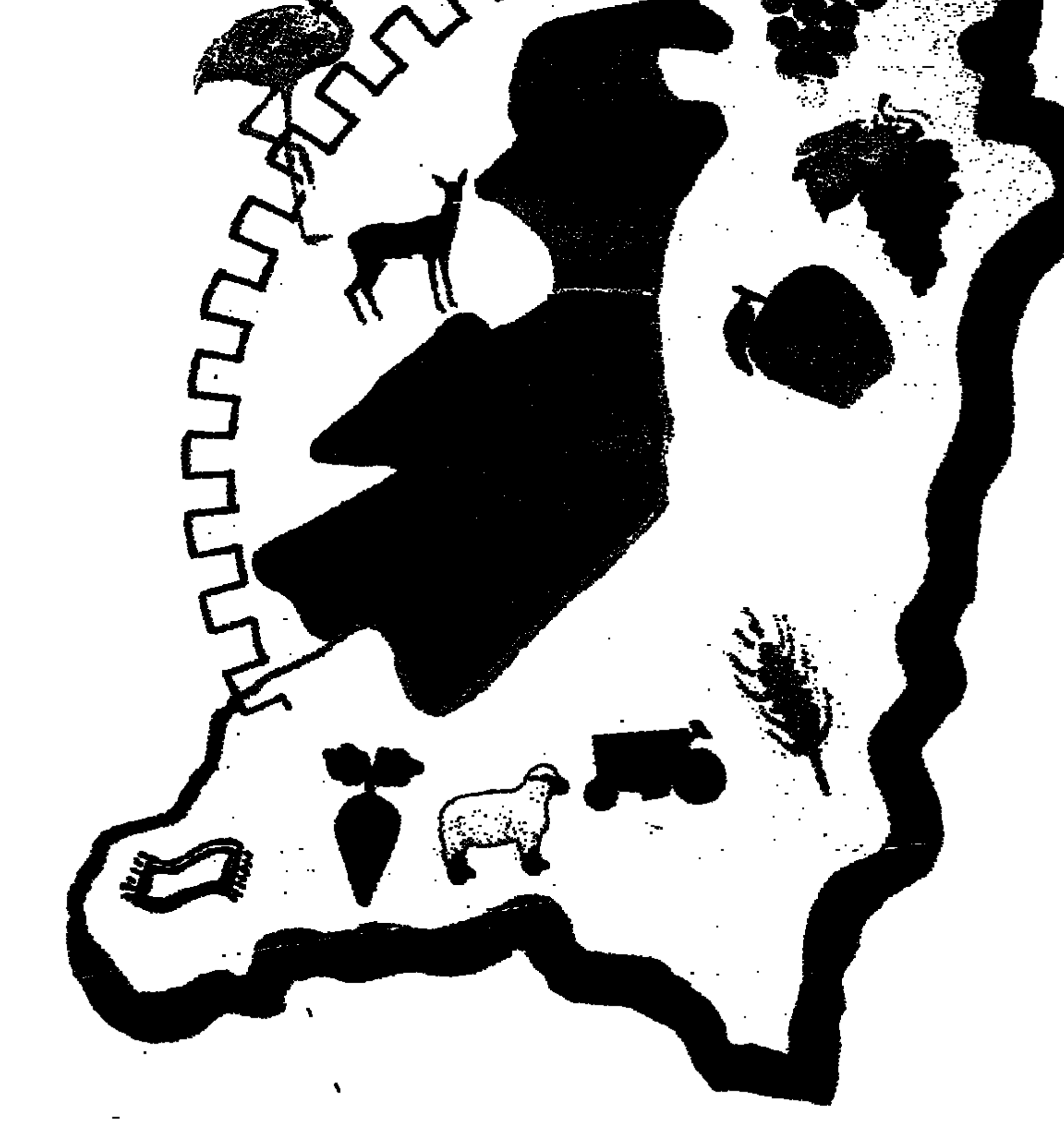




In the Name of God

# West Azarbaijan Governor's Office With the Cooperation and Participation of Urumieh University, Jihad Department of Urumieh University, Medical University, Applied Scientific Comprehensive University, and Budget and Plan Organization Holds:



CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers, Plans and Suggestions

Following the blessed and auspicious visit of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei to the gold land of West Azarbaijan, and with inspirations from the Supreme Leader's guidelines in line with the economic, and social development of the province, and materialization of the objectives behind the historic visit of the leader to the province, the Governor's Office of West Azarbaijan intends to enjoy the thinkers and scholars' views and hold the first Seminar on Development and Construction in West Azarbaijan Province in Mordad, 1376 (July-August, 1997) in Urumieh. The seminar will discuss and evaluate economic factors of the province based on the plans offered, and in conformity with the potentialities and capacities of the province.

Therefore, all the interested researchers, university professors, university staff, planners, experts, and specialists are invited to participate in the seminar by presenting essays, plans and suggestions to share the blossoming of this gold region of our Islamic country.

Topics for Papers, Plans and Suggestions

1- Practical strategies in social and economic affairs to create industrial, commercial, service, trade, job opportunities, and revival of native regional industries with the aim of growth and development in the province.

2- Studying the potential fields for the activities of public and private sectors and the process of revival and redevelopment of economy as well as its generalization in the distribution of public services plus social justice.

3- Ways of developing agriculture sector as the main economic factor in the province's 'earn for living,' development of mechanized ways of agriculture and utilization of agriculture products: apples, grapes and other strategic products, industries related to and in line with the optimization of the value of the land, manpower, capital and technology.

4- Determining the status of industries and mines in the economy of the region and identifying the missing opportunities in line with the full optimization of the present facilities.

5- Presenting ways for attracting capital and economic capital-holders to the province, due to existing commercial potentialities and province's common borders with three foreign countries as well as active border customs.

6- Evaluating management and its role in planning, priorities and development.

7- Studying the characteristics of manpower of the region from the point of view of specialty, skill, proficiency and its role in the development of the province.

8- Studying the transport industry, communications and the ways of development and economic growth in the province, regarding the existing infrastructure facilities such as railway, Shahid Kalantari Highway, and mass media, airports.

9- Ways of carrying out short-, mid- and long-term plans in the development of animal husbandry, reviving pastures, marine creatures (fisheries), improving animal races, in relation to weather and food factors and utilization of intermediate industries in animal products.

10- Planning and carrying out recycling plans for agricultural waste of the province

11- Studying the possibility of extracting mine salts from Urumieh Lake and using water, seaside, and plant mixtures, as well as wild animals in the lake's islands. Industrial and chemical utilization (sodium, chlorine, magnesium) and artemisia.

12- Investigating tourism attractions and reviving tourism industry regarding the tourist attractions of the seasides, islands, ports and Shahid Kalantari highway (which links East and West Azarbaijan provinces via Urumieh Lake).

13- Indentifying energy resources: electricity, gas and studying the role of energy in the development of the province.

14- Investigating promotion of border economy, peddlery and creating border guardians' cooperatives; planning for the development of border economy in order to combat adverse border phenomena like smuggling.

15- Investigating welfare and cultural affairs of the province and developing cultural fields: arts, cinema, theater, native industries and their role in the development of the province.

Qualifications for Papers, Plans and Suggestions

1- The topic under study should be on one of the topics mentioned above.

2- The papers and plans should rely on scientific ways and the resources should all be mentioned in the paper.

3- Introduction of the papers should be a summary of the important discussions and topics in at most three A4 pages. The papers should contain conclusion and the results.

4- The papers, including the introduction as well as the technical and economic explanations, should not be more than 30 pages of A4 size. The papers also should be legible.

5- The original papers, plans and suggestions should be sent to the secretariat of the seminar no later than June 15, 1997.

The papers, plans and suggestions will be evaluated by the experts of scientific committees, and if accepted, they will be printed in a collection of papers.

The selected papers and plans will be presented in general assemblies of the seminar, evaluated by the experts and professors, and the best of them will receive valuable prizes.

It should be noted that the invited participants will be hosted by the West Azarbaijan Governor's Office during the seminar.

Tariqat

*Deputy for Planning, Administrative and Financial Affairs of West Azarbaijan Governor's Office*

## Participation Form of the Seminar

Name: ........................................ Last Name: ........................................

Field of Study: ........................................

Education: Under BA ☐ BA ☐ MA ☐ PhD ☐

Post/Occupation: ........................................

Name of Organization/University/Institute/Company: ........................................

Cont. Tel: ........................................ Fax: ........................................

Address: ........................................

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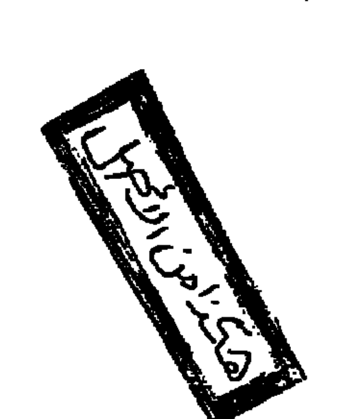
P.O.Box: ........................................

*Signature*

**Address of the Secretariat:**

West Azarbaijan Province, Urumieh, W. Azarbaijan Governor's Office, Planning Office, Secretariat of the Seminar.

Tel: 0098441 40695-8 (Haj Tariqat)



هكذا من الأصل



# Hegmatan Cement Factory to Go on Stream in Near Future

Engineer Khorram, Hamedan Province's Governor General announced during the coming months Hegmatan Cement Factory will be formally inaugurated by the flagbearer of construction, President Hashemi Rafsanjani, said a report faxed by public relations of the Governor's Office.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the first phase of the factory the government general said: In his coming visit to Hamedan Province, the president will formally put on stream the giant project of Hegmatan Cement Factory as one of the most important projects of the region.

Also present in the inauguration ceremony of the first phase of Hegmatan Cement Factory were Engineer Zahirnia, director general for Hamedan Province's industries; Engineer Davoodi from the Headquarters for National Cement Projects of the Country; along with a few other managers and responsible officials of Hamedan Province and Razan district.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Engineer Qaeli, head of the Board of Directors of Hegmatan Cement Factory welcoming the governor general, the entourage and the participants gave a short report on the efforts and endeavors of the responsible authorities of the province for inauguration of the first phase of the factory during the recent months.

Referring to the financial problems of the project, Engineer Qaeli expressed hope, relying on the emphasis Minister of Industries Engineer Ne'matzadeh put on meeting the financial requirements of the factory, "it is hoped that the factory will completely go on stream as soon as possible."

Engineer Krushavi deputy managing director of Hegmatan Cement Factory was the next speaker who in turn elaborated on the project: So far 90 percent of the project has been accomplished. With putting on stream the first phase of the project, all the managers and Board of Directors of the factory will spare no efforts to complete the rest of operations to make the whole project ready at the appointed time schedule for the inauguration by the hands of President Hashemi Rafsanjani.



Head of Board of Directors and deputy managing director of Hegmatan elaborate on the ways of completing the project at a meeting with the province's governor general and directors general.

Elaborating on the details of the activities, percentage of the success of the operations, installation of machineries and equipment, regulation, important irrigation and power supply projects of Hegmatan Cement Factory, Engineer Krushavi said: The responsible authorities of the factory do not have any kind of problems to complete the rest of the production line.

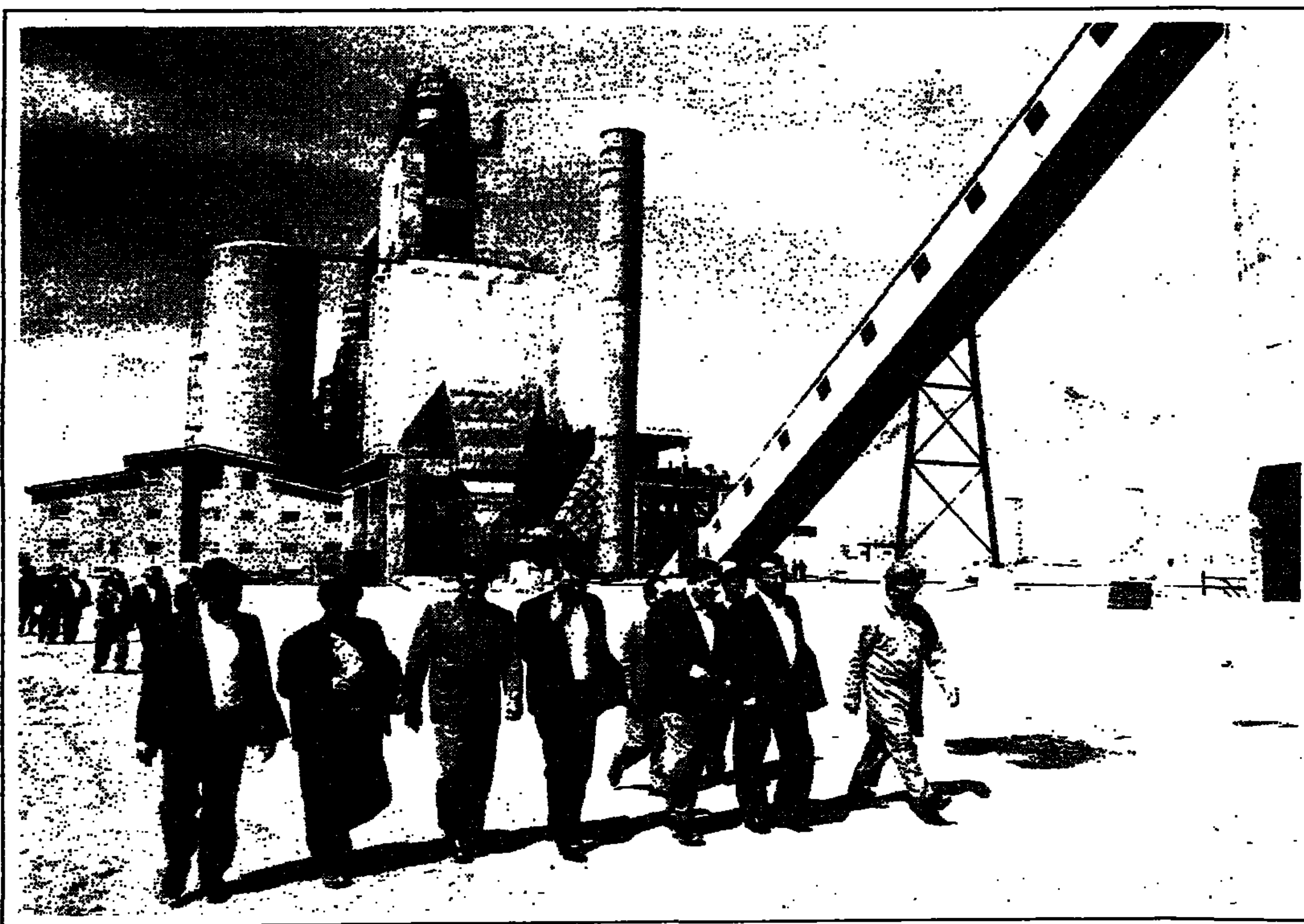
Also referring on the operational works of the mill unit of the factory's material, the deputy managing director of the factory said: With the endeavors and capabilities of the experts and technical staff of the factory, this unit will also be operational in near future.

To end his remarks, deputy managing director of the factory appreciated the efforts and supports of Minister of Industries Ne'matzadeh, Hamedan Province's governor general, director general for the province's industries, as well as other local authorities of the project, and managing director of Ehdas San'at Company. "It is a matter of pride for the managers and Board of Directors of the company to materialize an important cement project with a very low expenditure and with only a limited number of foreign technicians. We hope to finish the whole project very soon thus meet a large portion of cement requirements of the province and the neighboring cities."

According to the same report, Engineer Ma'sumian, managing director of Hegmatan Cement Factory was the next speaker who said: Hegmatan Cement Factory, after its formal inauguration will produce 2,400 tons of Portland Type 2 cement each day.

He added: It should be mentioned that almost 7,500 tons of machinery and equipment have been used in creating and making operational of the factory, 4,500 of which is domestically provided and the rest is imported from international markets.

At the end of the ceremony, inaugurating the first phase of the factory, Hamedan Province's governor general visited the other sections of the factory including section for processing the material, sample-taking unit, production lines and machinery.



Hamedan Province's governor general, Engineer Khorram and his entourage accompanied by some of the province's directors general, head of Board of Directors, and deputy managing director of Hegmatan Cement Factory visit the operational works of the factory.

# Energy Troubles Plague Ukraine Eleven Years After Chernobyl

PRIPYAT, Ukraine — This city, the heart of the Chernobyl "dead zone," is a silent testament to the world's worst nuclear disaster.

All the inhabitants are gone.

A motionless Ferris wheel dominates the cracked pavement of a deserted amusement park. Bumper cars sit rusting. A merry-go-round moves slowly in the wind.

effects. Those who go into Pripyat leave the city at the end of their shifts.

A few elderly people have moved back to their villages inside the "dead zone," but none of them live in Pripyat.

But while the abandoned city wears the physical scars of the Chernobyl, the rest of Ukraine still lives with the fallout in the barrel-nosed steam engines built in 1948 out of mothballs.

When Ukraine gained independence from Moscow in 1991 it inherited an aging Soviet-era industrial base — as well as outdated policies and attitudes toward energy use. It still relies on Russia for nuclear fuel, more than 80 percent of its gas and 95 percent of its oil.

Urged on by the West, Ukraine has haltingly begun to restructure the energy sector, but has hesitated to hike prices, break up regional monopolies and force debtor enterprises to pay for power.

Worried the energy troubles are bankrupting the economy and slowing reforms, President Leonid Kuchma says lowering consumption is crucial.

One of the four Chernobyl reactors is still operating, though it is expected to be shut down by 2000 with massive amounts of Western aid.

In an agreement reached this week with the Group of Seven industrialized nations, Ukraine agreed to shore up the cracking sarcophagus and build a new shell around it. Funding is to come from yet-to-be-determined foreign aid.

But officials say Ukraine's cash-poor nuclear plants will be unable to complete routine repairs this summer, adding to worries about the nuclear fuel inside Chernobyl's deteriorating steel-and-concrete mausoleum.

"It is not under our complete control, and information about it is insufficient," Chernobyl deputy general director Valentin Kupny said of the sarcophagus. "We do not know yet what is going on in there." *(AP)*

***In the center of the zone is the hulking gray "sarcophagus" that was hastily built over the radioactive ruins of the fourth Chernobyl reactor after it exploded and caught fire 11 years ago April 26. The explosion killed at least 32 people and sent radiation skyward, exacting human and environmental tolls that still aren't fully known.***

And in the center of the zone is the hulking gray "sarcophagus" that was hastily built over the radioactive ruins of the fourth Chernobyl reactor after it exploded and caught fire 11 years ago April 26. The explosion killed at least 32 people and sent radiation skyward, exacting human and environmental tolls that still aren't fully known.

Pripyat was once a thriving city of 46,000, built especially for Chernobyl workers and their families. Today, only a few police and workers monitor the 19-mile (30 kms) zone around the plant for the disaster's lingering form of everyday energy problems, an added weight on the country's listless economy.

Ukraine remains strapped by its fuel dependence on Russia and mired in mismanagement, inefficiency and debt that keep the nation constantly on the edge of an energy crisis.

The country gets 45 percent of its energy from its five nuclear power plants, but the stations are dangerously short of cash.

Some residents in Kiev, the capital, have spent the last nine months without hot water. One railroad line was so desperate for diesel fuel it has taken a pair of

## Astronomers Add Another Planet to Their Collection

NEW YORK — Astronomers announced the discovery of a Jupiter-sized planet orbiting a nearby star, boosting their confidence that there are many more planets to be found — perhaps even some that harbor life.

The object orbiting Rho Coronae Borealis is hardly the first to be discovered circling another star — depending on how you count, it's somewhere in the ninth to 13th range.

But it is still significant, astronomers say, because it fills in a gap in their planet collection and reinforces their belief that more exist.

The discovery was announced Thursday by Robert Noyes of the Harvard-Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and seven other astronomers. It is to be reported in a future issue of *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

"It's a very nice discovery," said Alan Boss, an astronomer at the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C. "even a single discovery like this can make people stop and rethink everything that's happened so far."

The new planet lies about 23 million miles (37 million kilometers) from its star, or about a quarter the distance from the sun to earth. The star itself is close by astronomical standards, about 50 light years from earth.

Because the planet is closer to its star than Mercury is to the sun, its surface temperature is estimated at 400 to 500 degrees Fahrenheit (204 to 260 degrees Celsius). That's much too hot to support life, but there's a good chance that more livable planets could be orbiting Rho Coronae Borealis or a similar star.

"There could well be many smaller planets in these systems that we just can't see by present techniques," Noyes said.

Current technology can detect a planet of the size and at the distance of Jupiter or Saturn, but is not sophisticated enough to find earth-like planets around other stars.

To date, the planets that have been found around other stars fall into two broad categories, Boss said: hot Jupiters and cold Jupiters.

Hot Jupiters orbit very close to their stars, within about 10 million miles (16 million kilometers), while Cold Jupiters lie much farther out, at 100 million miles (160 million kilometers) or more. Both types are giants, ranging from Jupiter's size — which is 300 times earth's by mass — to several times that big. *(AP)*

## Computer Program Produces Profile of Potential Abuser

CARSON, California — Domestic batterers are meeting their match in a computer program now being tried by authorities that assesses how dangerous the abusers really are to their victims.

Created by celebrity security expert Gavin de Becker, the software known as Mosaic-20 produces a behavioral profile of a domestic violence defendant based on a 48-question interview with the victim.

The questions probe into the relationship of the couple and the behavior of the batterer in every aspect from romance and family to job performance and substance abuse.

The program then compares the profile with thousands of others in its database and gives a threat ranking between one and 10; a score of 10 translates to very dangerous, even likely to kill.

While a growing number of law enforcement officials praise the program for its potential to keep dangerous abusers away from victims, defense attorneys question Mosaic's fairness and accuracy.

"Can it be relied upon? Can the rights of the defendants not be jeopardized?" questions Winston Peters, a Los Angeles public defender.

He acknowledged he had not heard of the program, but added that the justice system is entering a "slippery slope when there is a scientific attempt at quantifying the level of dangerousness of a person, and it raises serious questions about due process."

"Many people will tell you we can't predict human behavior. We say that's not true," said Bob Martin, vice president of De Becker's Mosaic division.

De Becker has worked on numerous high-profile investigations. *(AP)*

## U.S. Weather Satellite Blasts Off

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla — A much-needed spare for the United States' weather satellite network soared into space on Friday.

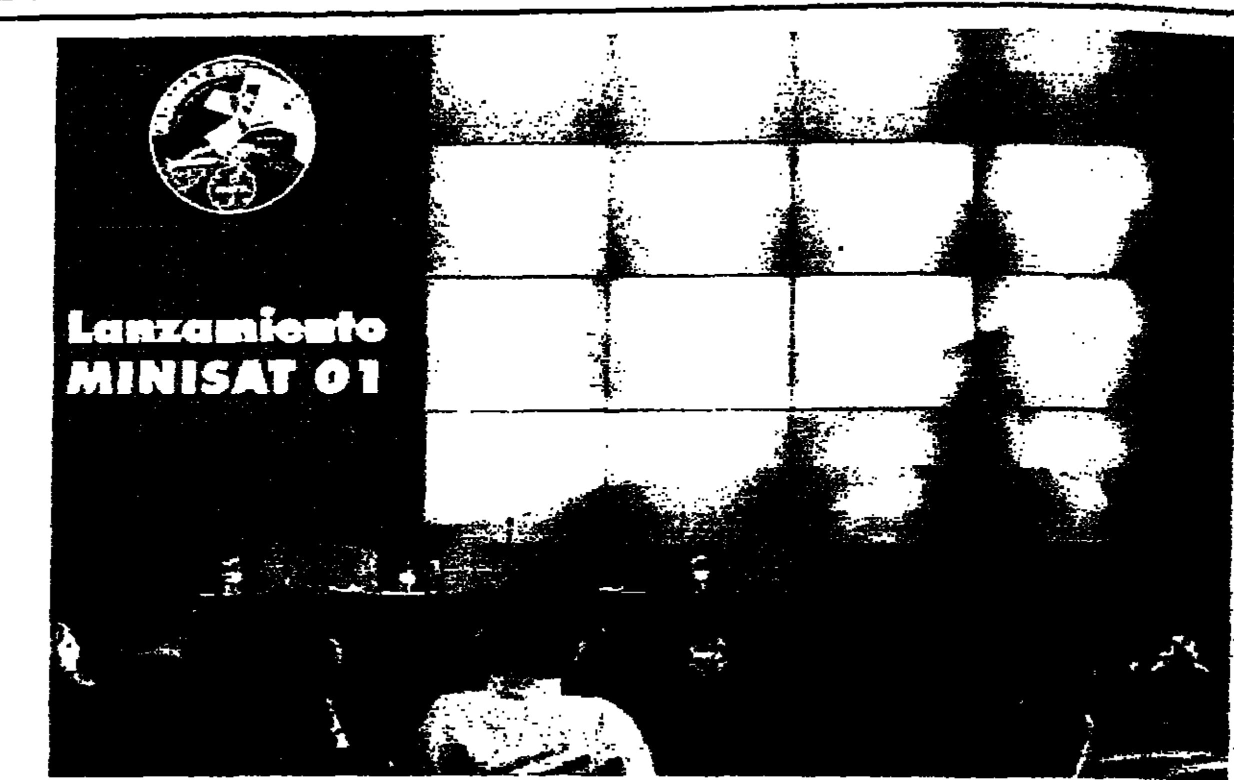
The 220 million GOES-K satellite blasted off into a clear, crisp Florida night sky at 1:49 a.m. EDT (0549 GMT), riding atop a slender, silver and white Atlas rocket.

The launch of the Lockheed Martin rocket was delayed 24 hours by stormy weather an gusty winds at the Cape Canaveral launch site.

About 30 minutes after blast-off the 4,640-lb (2,105 kg) satellite was placed into a temporary egg-shaped orbit. Its on-board rocket motor was to fire seven times to station the spacecraft 22,300 miles (35,900 km) above the equator.

The satellite was built by Space Systems Loral for NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The spacecraft will join two existing goes spacecraft in orbit watching both coasts of North America. Both satellites have suffered technical difficulties and forecasters were eager to get a spare into space should one of the older craft fail. *(Reuter)*




MADRID, Spain (April 27): Spanish journalists watch from a screen in Torrejon near Madrid, the Pegasus rocket launching the first Spanish satellite, Minisat 1, from a military base in the Canary Islands on April 21. The rocket carried the ashes of LSD guru Timothy Leary and Gene Roddenberry, creator of "Star Trek."

*(AFP PHOTO)*

## New Chinese Fossils — a Gold Mine of Evidence

PHILADELPHIA — Scientists say that fossils recently found in China offer exciting, clear pictures of ancient life, including a chicken-sized dinosaur that appeared to have downy fluff along its spine and the first fossilized internal organ ever found from a dinosaur.

"Nowhere else in the world are fossils from such a critical time so well preserved," paleontologist John H. Ostrum said in an interview Thursday before speaking at a forum at the Academy of Natural Sciences.

The Yale professor, who suggested in 1973 that birds directly descend from dinosaurs, recently returned from Chinese museums where scientists examined fossils found last summer in the western Liaoning Province.

While many fossil sites only preserve the bones of ancient animals, the Liaoning site preserved surface features like claws, scales and skin, according to paleontologists.

"There are plant remains, insect remains, fish remains and land animal remains. It has just begun to be exploited," Ostrum said.

Among the more interesting remains is the fossil of the chicken-sized dinosaur that the Chinese named sinosauropteryx prima.

Scientists from the Chinese geology museum in Beijing said in the journal *Chinese Geology* that its fluffed-up feature "suggests it is the earliest bird in the world."

Ostrum said the find does not prove his theory of kinship between birds and dinosaurs. "But it doesn't hurt it at all. It provides a new source for evidence," he said.

Ostrum described the bird-dinosaur's covering as "unlike anything we have ever seen in the world before — quite different from modern feathers or hair, but also different from the skin of other dinosaurs."

"We are still debating, discussing, exploring with each other what this might be, why it looks that way," he said.

The small dinosaur, which stood on two legs with stubby forelimbs, is thought to be between 120 million and 140 million years old.

While a bird-dinosaur link is important to Ostrum, he said the significance of the fossil field lies in the quality of specimens that can be recovered.

"I think the potential of the field site is unbelievable," he said. *(AP)*

## Internet: Risky Area for Health Advice

WASHINGTON — Using the Internet as an exercise adviser give you tips from a world-renowned physician or a famous trainer.

Or a snake oil salesman or an eccentric stranger.

The Internet has no quality control, so separating the good information from the bad is up to you.

"Information on the Internet is subject to the same rules and regulations as conversation at a bar," said Dr. George D. Lundberg, editor of the journal of the American Medical Association. "It may be very valid; it may be utter trash."

AMA will run an editorial in its April 16 edition on standards for information on Websites.

The AMA has its own Website (www.ama-assn.org). So it's not that Lundberg thinks Net usage is necessarily bad for your health. But he and other experts caution that the Internet makes it easy for anyone to offer an opinion, wise or otherwise.

"The Internet is the world's largest vanity press," Lundberg said.

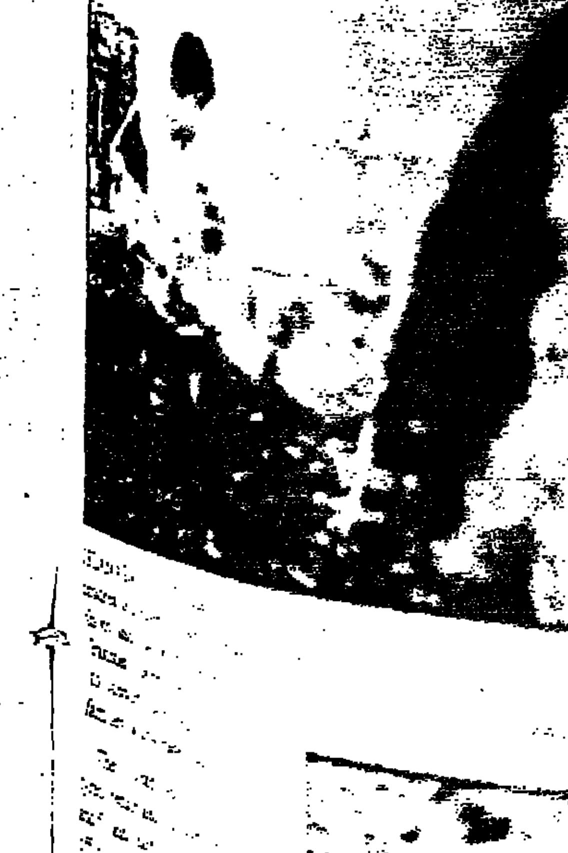
A nice layout may not mean good content; glittering Websites don't always deliver gold, said Mary Jo Deering, director of health communications and telehealth for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Some people make the opposite assumption; if it's glitzy, it's probably selling something," she said.

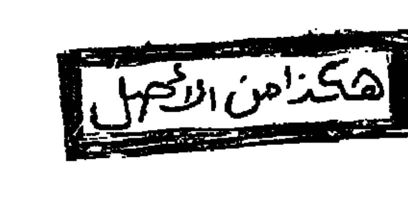
Users need to show the same skepticism on the Internet that they would on other consumer matters.

"The biggest thing is, 'Who's putting it on?'" said Dr. Dave Jenkinson of the University of Pittsburgh. "If someone is coming up with a position, do they have the research to back it up, and is the research credible?"

Jenkinson runs two Internet operations. One is a Website that is still in testing; the other is a Listserv, which is a text-based bulletin board on which researchers and others interested in sports medicine exchange ideas. *(AP)*







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# UN to Investigate Alleged Rebel Massacres in Zaire

GENEVA — A UN commission will next month investigate alleged massacres carried out by Zairean rebels, visiting the Goma region on the Rwandan border to examine mass graves, a UN spokeswoman said.

The special envoy to the Great Lakes region for the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, Mohamed Sahnoun, has obtained permission from the rebels, led by Laurent Kabila, to go to the region, spokeswoman Therese Gastaut said.

The UN Human Rights Commission, which wound up its six-week-long annual session on Friday, decided to send an international mission after a visit from the special rapporteur for Zaire, Roberto Garreton of Chile.

Garreton said early this month that he believed that rebels had carried out some massacres and said he had accounts from witnesses and had seen what he thought to be mass graves.

He called for a enquiry commission of UN special rapporteurs and experts to find out how many people could have been killed near former camps for Rwandan Hutu refugees in the border area.

He dismissed however some speculation that the number of dead ran into tens of thousands.

The team will include Garreton, the special rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary and arbitrary executions, Bacre n'Diaye of Senegal, and a member of the UN working group on arbitrary detention.



They will be helped by three experts from the UN Human Rights Center and three forensic doctors.

A first meeting of the team is planned in Geneva on May 1 and 2.

The mission would then go to the Rwandan capital Kigali and on to Goma on May 4 if security conditions permit, Gastaut said.

The UN experts should stay for a week and the doctors for a month, she added.

Eastern Zaire was home to hundreds of thousands of refugees who had fled Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, including Hutu former soldiers and extremists judged responsible for the genocide.

Most of the refugees poured back into Rwanda after the rebellion began in Zaire last October, while about 100,000 others fled westwards ahead of rebel advances. UN agencies are currently seeking to repatriate them. (AFP)

# ILO Proposes Sweeping Measures to Boost Social Progress Drive

GENEVA — The International Labor Organization is proposing a new set of concrete rules to invigorate its drive to promote social progress along with trade liberalization, ILO Director General Michel Hansenne said.

Chief among the new measures is a "global social label" that would be awarded to countries which show comprehensive respect for fundamental labor rights and principles, Hansenne said.

Hansenne acknowledged that many private initiatives were currently being deployed, directed at improving working conditions.

However, he said such intiatives risked being ambiguous and arbitrary.

By benefitting some workers and perhaps leaving others outside of their scope, "we cannot be sure that they will not lead to some kind of disguised protectionism" he told journalists.

A global social label controlled by the ILO is a "better alternative," Hansenne said, adding that it would include a system of "legally autonomous international inspections," under the framework of a convention.

The label idea is one of three steps promulgated in an ILO report issued Tuesday and which will be submitted to the annual International Labor Conference to be held in Geneva in June.

The other core "moral" weapons in the ILO's planned armory to promote humane conditions along with economic globalization are: — Promoting ratification of the seven existing ILO conventions — A new declaration complementing the ILO constitution

- Periodic reports by the ILO on social progress or the lack of it in member states.



The United States has not yet ratified all of the texts, which Hansenne called a "problem. They have not ratified a certain number of principal conventions because they say this would give rise to a whole number of legal problems."

The idea of a declaration, aimed to be adopted in 1998, is to provide strengthened "supervisory mechanisms" to promote ILO principles. "We hope for a consensus among members," Hansenne said.

The ILO's aim that all workers should share in the fruits of globalization could be monitored through regular reports by the ILO.

Tripartite debates — between labor unions, governments and employers — after such reports are issued would allow the public to evaluate the efforts made in each country to translate the economic development resulting from trade liberalization into genuine social progress, Hansenne said.

The liberalization of trade "must go hand-in-hand with social progress," Hansenne said, adding "there must be evidence that its promises are not vain or illusory."

The ILO was given a strong mandate to deal with the issue of promoting social progress along with trade liberalization at the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting in Singapore last December. (AFP)

# Thousands of Children Working as Cheap Labor in Karachi



ISLAMABAD — Thousands of children are toiling at auto-repair shops and car-wash stations in Pakistan's largest city of Karachi to support their impoverished families, a newspaper reported.

They clean vehicles, remove tyres, repair and fill them with air and fix auto parts, besides dashing off to fetch food and perform other chores for adult employees, Karachi's leading English-language daily dawn said.

In its report published it cited the cases of several children forced away by poverty from schools and homes.

Yasir dropped out of class to work in a dirty, grimy welding shop.

His father works as a truck driver for monthly wages of 1,800 rupees ($45) and Yasir's 60 rupees ($1.5) daily supplement the meager earnings of the family of eight people.

A welder working with Yasir explained why the boy's family had not educated their only son. "it costs at least 1,000 rupees per month to send a child to school,



not to mention the cost of uniforms and books," he said.

A 12-year old fatherless child was dropped off by his uncle five months ago to wash and clean vehicles at a service station. "I do not like this work, I want to study," said the boy, identified only as Abid.

Employers engage boys at a fraction of regular wages, the report said.

At a petrol pump five boys have been hired as mechanics, earning as little as 20 rupees (half a dollar) each per day. One of them, 11-year old Kashif, said they were working to help their families.

Ramzan, 15, was taken to a car washing station by his elder brother because the boy was uninterested in studies and was instead turning into a "vagabond and a thief."

A contractor told the newspaper that children were routinely brought for work by their relatives.

"The children are able to perform nimble chores which makes it more suitable to hire them in comparison to adults," he said. (AFP)

# Taleban Criticized for Human Rights Violation

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taleban government recently rejected criticism of its strict Islamic policies leveled at a recent human rights conference in Geneva.

The Taleban has enforced a strict version of Islamic law in the two-thirds of Afghanistan it controls, forbidding women from working, banning girls from school and forcing men to pray in mosques.

International human rights groups have assailed the Taleban's attitude toward women and its summary arrests of minority ethnic groups.

The Taleban is locked in a fierce battle with a northern-based coalition which espouses a more liberal view of Islam and which largely represents the country's ethnic minorities.

Most Taleban fighters belong to the country's majority Pashtun ethnic group. The coalition against the Taleban represents the ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks, Shiite Muslims and a small Ismaeili sect of Islam.

Amir Khan Muttaqi a Taleban politician speaking to journalists in the war-shattered Afghan capital said human rights workers were frightened off by Afghanistan's ongoing civil war, claiming many were too scared to even drive the bumpy roads leading into Kabul.

He called on human rights investigators to visit Taleban zones before making statements against its leadership.

Muttaqi also defended the Taleban's record on drugs.

Afghanistan now ranks second only to Burma as the world's largest producer of poppy, the raw material used to make opium and heroin, according to the UN.

The Taleban has banned growing and smoking hashish, a drug popular among Afghans, but has not moved to limit poppy cultivation.

Foreign anti-narcotics officials say most of the poppy cultivated in Afghanistan is processed into heroin along the rugged Pakistan border and then smuggled to Europe and the United States.

Muttaqi said the Taleban lacked funds to combat the lucrative opium trade, but would take action if given international funding.

"The UN should come to talk to us about this issue. We are ready to cooperate and coordinate our activity to fight the drug trade," he said.

Farmers in southern Helmand province used to cultivate more than 50,000 tons of cotton annually, Muttaqi said.

But years of civil war have destroyed irrigation systems and left thousands of hectares (acres) littered by land mines, reducing cotton output to a mere 2,000 tons a year, he said.

"People cultivate opium because they need money," said Muttaqi. "But no one in Taleban zones can smoke opium or hashish."

Muttaqi also said the Taleban has sent a captured opposition commander to its southern seat of government in Kandahar, 550 km (330 miles) southwest of Kabul, to face trial for sedition.

Mohammed Zaheer, who was captured by the Taleban last week during fighting in eastern Nangahar province, is the son of Haji Qadir a powerful commander fighting the Taleban.

Qadir controlled Nangahar since the fall of Afghanistan's communists in 1992 until he was overrun last September by the Taleban Islamic militia, which went on to capture Kabul.

The Taleban believe Qadir's forces are behind recent insurgencies in Nangahar and neighboring Kunar province.

"But now there is no more danger to the Taleban in Nangahar," said Muttaqi. (AP)



# CHILDREN'S PAGE

## THE KING AND THE COCK



In the days of old there was a king who ruled over a large country. He also owned much land as his personal property, which brought him a fat income every year. In his service he had a proud, har-working young cock who worked day and night on the royal estate. It plowed the land, sowed the seeds, reaped the crops, and threshed the wheat.

One year, when the crop was richer than ever before, the king visited his field and was pleased to see the huge tall heaps of wheat standing neatly in rows.

The cock stepped forward with a smile on its beak and said: "Now please give me my share of the wheat as wages for all my hard work."

The king frowned, thought a minute, and then said: "You can have as much of it as you can put into your two ears. That will be your due and proper share."

The cock began stuffing grain into its ears and within minutes not a grain was left on the ground. The king was much displeased to see all the heaps of wheat vanishing before his eyes. Now it was his turn to ask for a share.

"But don't you remember, Your Majesty, that you said I could have all that I could put in my ears?" said the cock. "So this is all mine."

The king was speechless.

"Thank you very much, your Majesty," said the cock. "Now I'm going to a far country to sue for the hand of the king's daughter in marriage."

The cock set out on its long journey. "Presently it heard a fox calling ot it and stopped.

"Where are you bound?" asked the fox.

"I'm going to a far country to sue for the hand of the' king's daughter in marriage," answered the cock.

"Plrease let me go with you."

"The way is long and hard and you'll often be without food and water."

But still the fox insisted on coming along. After a few hours of walking, the fox became very tired and said it could walk no more. So the cock asked the fox to take a seat in its ear. The fox did so and the two of them — cock and fox — went on.

Presently the cock came upon a wolf, who said: "Where are you bound?"

"I'm going to a far country to sue for hte hand of the king's daughter in marriage."

"Please let me go with you."

"The way is long and hard and you'll often be without food and water."

But still the wolf insisted on coming along. After a few hours of walking the wolf became very tired and said it could walk no more. So the cock asked the wolf to take a seat in its ear. Heaving a sigh of relief, the wolf did so and the three of them — cock and fox and wolf — went on.

Presently the cock came upon a hyena, who said: "Where are you bound?"

"I'm going to a far country to sue for the hand of the king's daughter in marriage."

"Please let me go with you."

"The way is long and hard and you'll often be without food and water."

But still the hyena insisted on coming along. After a few hours a walking, the hyena became very tired and said it could walk no more. So the cock asked the hyena to take a seat in its ear. The hyena did so and the four of them — cock and fox and wolf and hyena — went on.

Presently the cock came upon a lion, who also insisted oncoming along. After even the hardy lion had become exhausted and taken a seat in the cock's ear, the five of them — cock and fox and wolf and hyena and lion — went on.

At last the cock reached the far country and sought audience with its king. It was admitted to the court. The king asked: "Why have you come to my kingdom?"

"I've come," replied the cock, "to sue for the hand of Your Majesty's daughter in marriage."

Insulted by such words, the king called to his guards: "Throw this presumptuous cock into the royal chicken pen!"

And right away the cock found itself locked in a chicken pen with all the other chickens. Immeditely the cock called the fox out of its ear. The hungry fox jumped out and began feasting on the flock of hens.

News of this mischief angered the king, and he gave new orders to his guards: "Throw that presumptuous cock into the royal sheep pen!"

Once in the sheep pen, the cock called the wolf out of its ear. The hungry wolf quickly devoured all the sheep.

News of this new mischief made the king wild with rage. He cried to his guards: "Throw that presumptuous cock into the donkey pen and let it be trampled under their hooves!"

But this time the cock called out the hungry hyena, who quickly killed all the donkeys.

The king's anger knew no bounds. "Bring the presumptuous cock before me and I'll punish it with my own hands!"

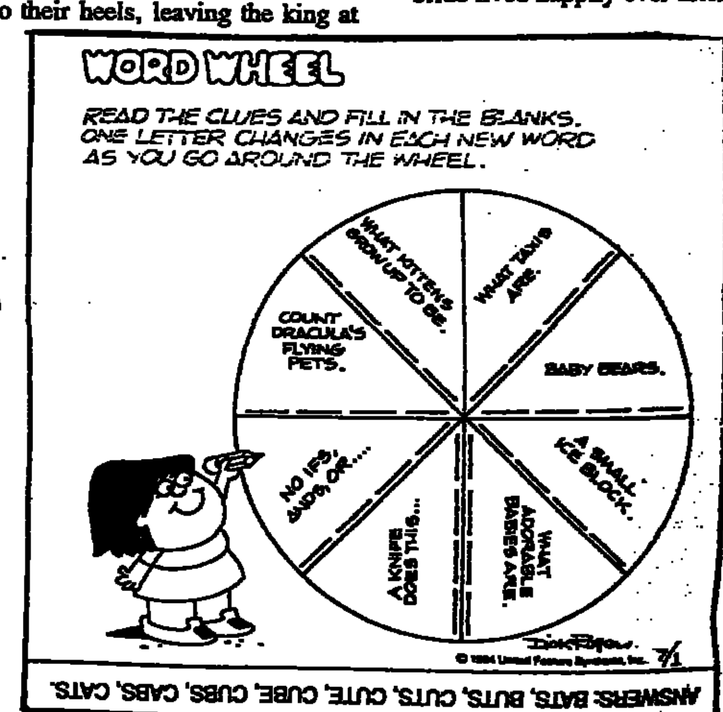
So the cock was brought before the king. It stood still a moment and then it called the hungry lion out of its ear.

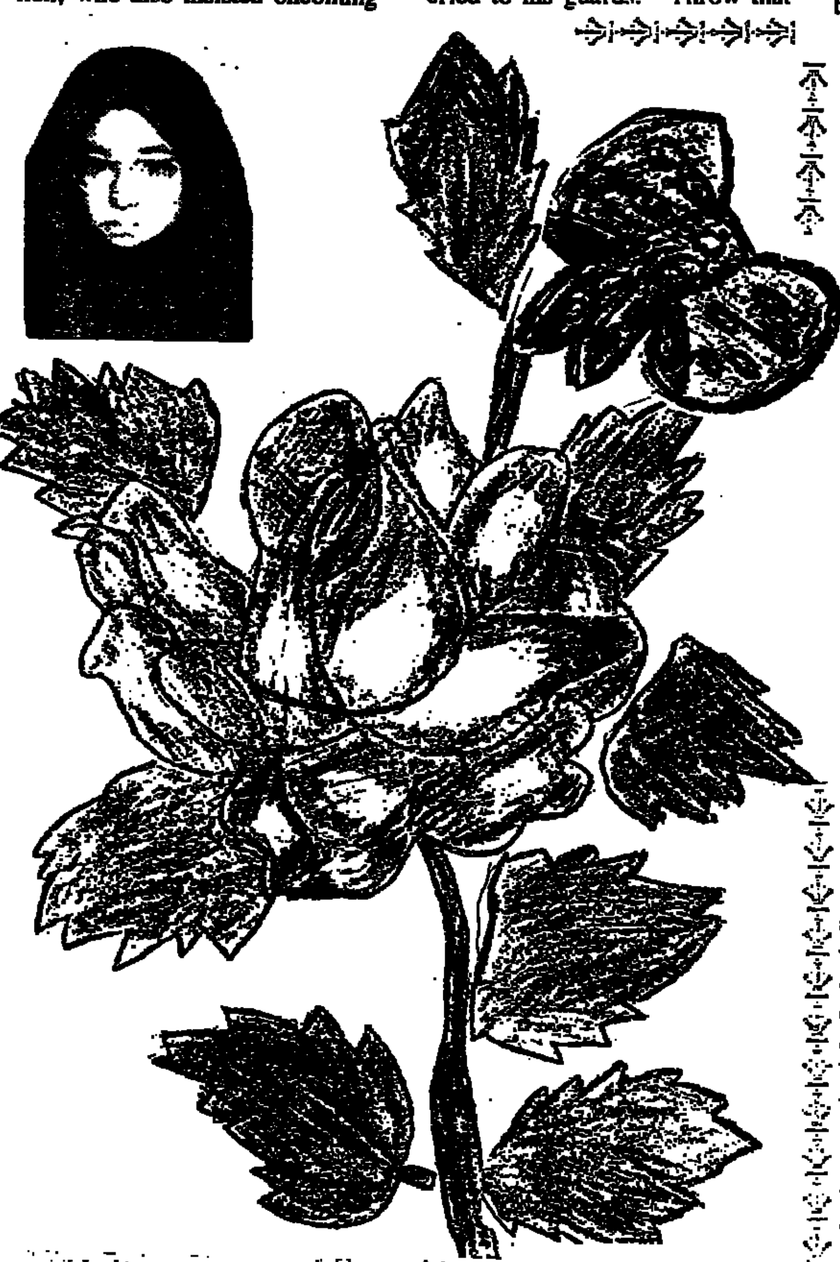
The lion jumped out roaring, grisly mane flying, showing its ferocious claws and savage teeth. The courtiers and guards all took to their heels, leaving the king at the mercy of the lion and the cock.

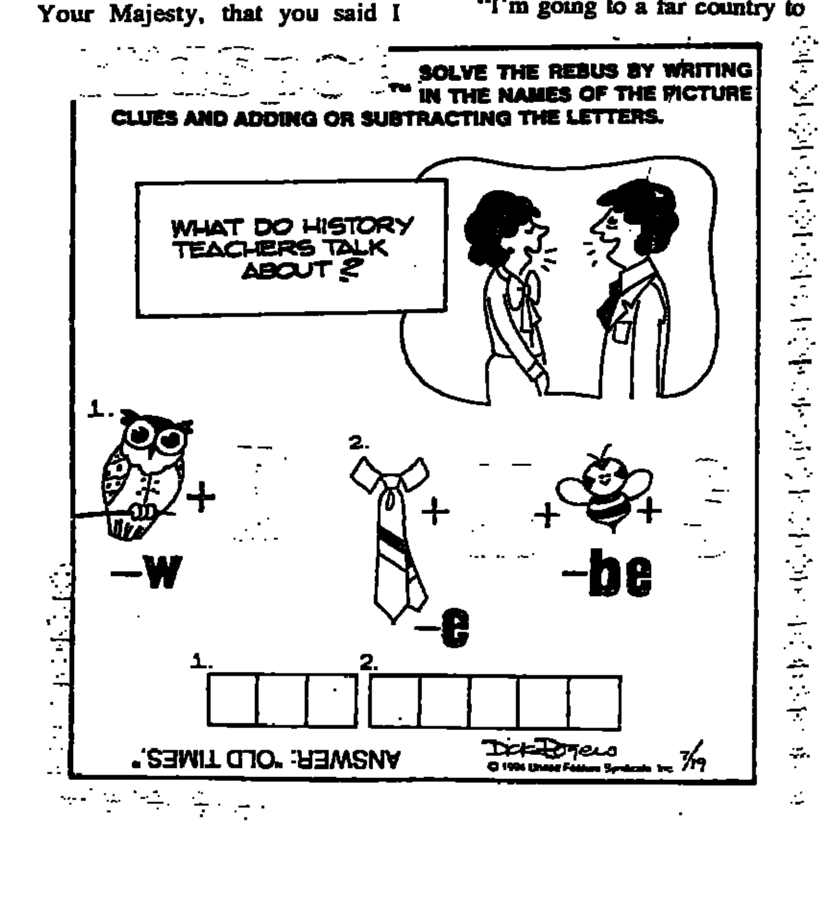
The king threw himself before the claws of the cock and cried: "Oh, good Mr. Cock, oh, noble Mr. Cock, please, oh, please accept the hand of my daughter in marriage. Please spare me and my people."

And thus it came about that there was a magnificent marriage ceremony with great fun and festivity. Everyone danced and sang, including the fox and the wolf and the hyena and the lion. As a dowry the king gave his daughter half of his kingdom. And the cock and his bride lived happily ever after.








## `How Smart Are Animals?

No other animals are as smart as people. But some are very intelligent. Apes, monkeys, and dolphins are the smartest. They can learn to do many things. Some of them can even solve problems. For example, a dolphin in a tank was once playing catch with a feather. One time the feather stuck to the side of the tank, high above the water. The game seemed to be over. But the dolphin figured out how to get the feather back. It jumped up and brushed the feather loose with the side of its head. The dolphin had solved its problem, and the game could go on. Most animals are not nearly this smart. Animals such as clams, crabs, insects, and worms are the least intelligent of all. They can't learn to do very much. Some can't learn anything.



